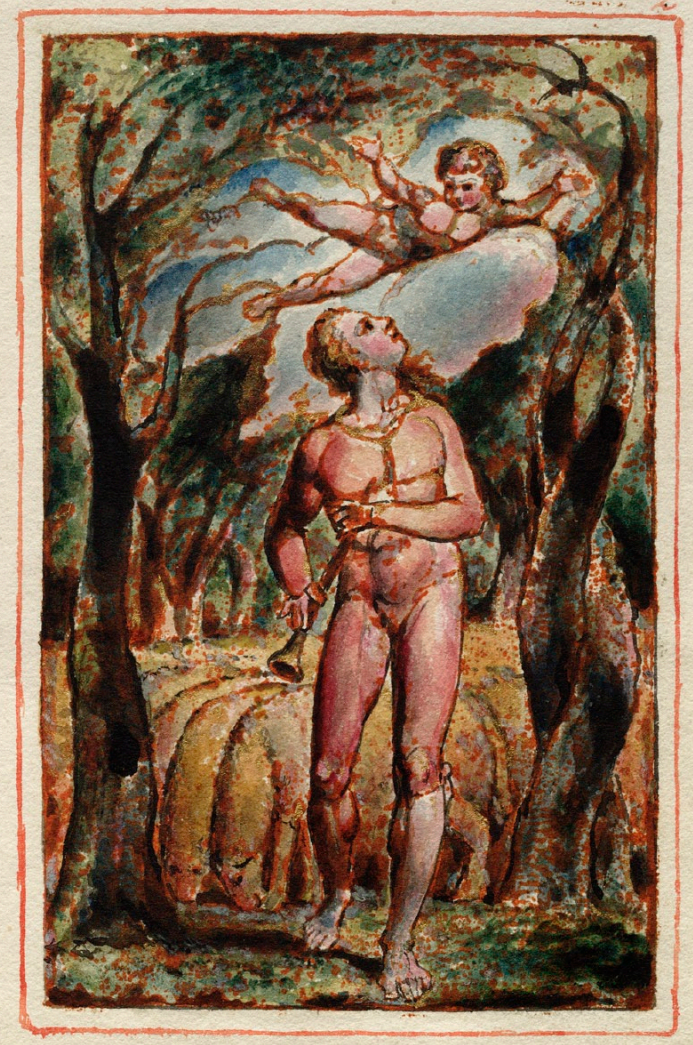
William Blake Songs of Innocence and of Experience

London, 1794



London, 1826

Detail from "The Little Girl Found," Copy C, 1794.

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Detail from "The Little Girl Found," Copy Z, 1826.

Songs of Innocence and of Experience

Stuart Curran

William Blake was born in the Soho district of London, then as now a densely populated urban area, on November 28, 1757. Except for a brief period early in the nineteenth century spent near the Sussex seacoast, London was Blake's home and the central point of focus for his entire life. He died there on August 12, 1827. He came from humble circumstances—his father was a hosier—and, though he himself was to work tirelessly as a commercial engraver, he never achieved much fame or fortune. Coming to his profession in the midst of England's great age of art, when Sir Joshua Reynolds presided over the Royal Academy, and luminaries such as Thomas Gainsborough, George Romney, and Thomas Lawrence successfully courted patronage from a wealthy upper class, Blake pursued his own vision in relative obscurity. As a precocious adolescent, he was given lessons at Henry Pars' Drawing School in the Strand and at the age of fourteen began a seven-year apprenticeship with James Basire, the engraver for the London Society of Antiquaries, which brought him into constant contact with examples of early British art he copied from ancient monuments, churches, and public buildings. By 1779 he had been admitted to the Royal Academy and began a career as a book illustrator, his source of income for most of his life. Relying on this modest professional security, in 1782 Blake married the illiterate daughter of a market-gardener, Catherine Boucher, to whom he was devoted. He educated her and trained her in the rudiments of art.

The year after Blake's marriage, in 1783, he saw into print the one volume of verse that he was to publish by conventional means, *Poetical Sketches*, but it made no mark with the public. Perhaps it was this failure that turned Blake's thoughts to producing his own work. Perhaps, instead, it was the mundane fact that, with nothing to warrant financial success, no sensible publisher would have been prepared to wager his business on so unlikely a prospect. Whatever the case, Blake turned his thoughts to how he might combine his considerable professional training as an artist with his passion for poetry, and he began to experiment with illuminated printing. Wholly in charge of his own production, from etching and inking his copperplates to hand-coloring the pages, Blake did not have to subscribe to the terms of production or the kinds of schedules we normally associate with a publishing house. His works could be produced individually or in small multiples over a period of decades, at times in response to specific commissions. Necessity probably dictated the method that Blake came to use. Unable to afford a commercial etching press and even at times hard put to undertake the expense of the essential copperplates, Blake developed a method that was fundamentally the opposite of customary etching, allowing him, using a varnish resistant to acid, to transfer his texts onto a heated copperplate from a specially coated paper, then add his designs and, after printing onto paper, superimpose coloring. This innovation required great skill but it also allowed Blake extraordinary flexibility in rendering his final product.

Detail from "The Clod & the Pebble," trial proof (top) and Copy Z (bottom).

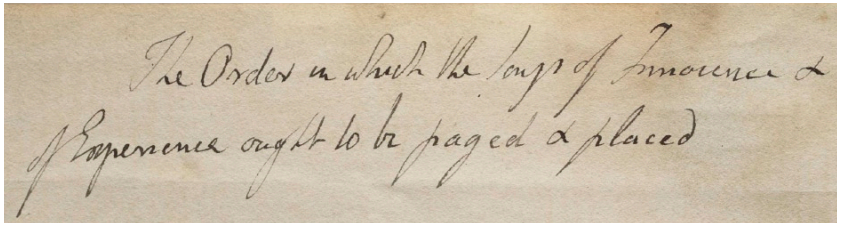
UNIQUENESS OF COPIES

William Blake printed the first copies of his expert fusion of illustration and verse, *Songs of Innocence*, in 1789, appropriately the landmark year that saw the eruption of a revolution that would forever change the character of western society. Four years later, he extended his original conception, issuing in October 1793 a prospectus for a companion work titled *Songs of Experience*. No separate volume under that name is known, so it is assumed that Blake rejected the notion and instead combined the sets of plates

early in 1794 as *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. Simple in their diction and tone, the combined *Songs* were the most popular of Blake's illuminated books in his own day; they carried his reputation after his death and the subsequent eclipse of his fame as an artist, and today they remain the most accessible and frequently read of his poems. This Octavo Edition presents one of the earliest and one of the latest copies of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience:* Copy C, 1794, and Copy Z, 1826 (for a summary of how letter designations were assigned to individual copies, see the Provenance note on page 13).

There are twenty-five copies of Blake's original separate *Songs of Innocence* extant, but of these only ten are actually complete; eleven—almost half—bear watermarks from the early years of the nineteenth century, well after the combined *Songs* were created. The *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* have fared better, surviving in some thirty complete (or nearly complete) copies, but only twenty-four of these were produced during Blake's lifetime—the others seem to date from the years just after his death and were likely made from the surviving copperplates under the supervision of his widow or close artist friends—and no more than fifteen of these can be assigned to the eighteenth century, when they were originally written.

There are many obvious pairings between the combined *Songs*, signaled by identical poem titles ("The Chimney Sweeper," "Holy Thursday," "Nurse's Song") or by obvious contrasts ("The Lamb" / "The Tyger"; "The Little Boy Lost" / "The Little Girl Lost"). Readers have occasionally attempted to derive a linear narrative thread through the volumes, but Blake's inconsistent arrangement of the plates in various copies ultimately frustrates any such endeavor. There are thirty-four distinct plate orders of the *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. In a manuscript dating after 1818, which is reproduced in this edition, Blake specifies an order for the combined *Songs,* but there is only one copy that actually subscribes to it (Copy V [1821], Morgan Library); later editors have generally disregarded this sequence. In this edition


The Order in which the Songs of Innocence &
of Experience ought to be paged & placed

Heading from Blake's manuscript index (Ephemera view 3): "The Order in which the Songs of Innocence & of Experience ought to be paged & placed."

we resuscitate it as a useful means for structuring a comparison of the plates of Copy C and Copy Z, which are quite differently arranged. With the combined *Songs,* as with all of Blake's illuminated works, readers must realize that no two copies are exactly alike, and that each was intended to be a radically distinct work of art.

Blake describes the combined *Songs* as "Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul" to emphasize the contrasting natures of the two parts, but he evidently conceived this contrast as far more complex than a strict bifurcation of the sequences suggests. In later copies, he shifted four poems from their original position among the *Songs of Innocence* to the *Songs of Experience* (and even then, not always uniformly). This restructuring is reflected in Copy Z: Blake repositioned "The Little Girl Lost," "The Little Girl Found," "The School Boy," and "The Voice of the Ancient Bard" among the *Songs of Experience*. It is possible to think of these repositioned songs as poems of transition between

innocence and experience, and the two poems devoted to the wanderings of Lyca and her parents ("The Little Girl Lost," "The Little Girl Found") seem to represent themselves in such a guise. Blake's repositioning of the plates, though, indicates a much larger conceptual intermingling, as innocence and experience constantly intrude on each other's domains.

ILLUSTRATIVE CONTRASTS

Copy C of the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* is, as the letter suggests, designated as one of the early renderings (though the paper lacks confirming watermarks). Its delicate pastel shadings emphasize the firm delineation of the designs underlying the coloring and effect a balance between design and poem, with neither given precedence over the other. Blake carefully composed the plates in Copy C so as never to intrude color onto the text and thus obscure its sense.

Copy Z, on the other hand, from a full generation later, reflects the vivid coloration of Blake's last great project, the designs for Dante's *Divine Comedy*, particularly those for the *Inferno*. By this point, critics assume, Blake felt that his works appealed to audiences mostly as visual artifacts and accordingly he invested much greater effort in their elaborate decoration. Some of the *Songs of Experience* in Copy Z—for instance, "A Poison Tree" (comparison 41) and "The Sick Rose" (comparison 43)—are so overpainted that their texts are very difficult to make out. Blake might have been aware of the problem his richer coloration was causing, for he appears to have retouched the printed text of Copy Z in many places to render it more distinct (see, for instance, the "Introduction" to *Songs of Innocence* [comparison 4]).

WILLIAM BLAKE *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* COPY C, LONDON, 1794; COPY Z, LONDON, 1826

Blake's elaborate decoration in later copies sometimes resulted in the obscuration of the words themselves. Left, Copy C; right, Copy Z.

The changes in Copy Z, however, go far beyond merely enriching the spectrum of color. The viewer is allowed to look over Blake's shoulder and watch him alter salient details in the design. If we look at the plate-by-plate comparison, the triangular will-o'-the-wisp in "The Little Boy Lost" (comparison 26) of Copy C is converted into an iridescent and explosive phantasm in Copy Z, at once enticing and dangerously alien. In "The Divine Image" (comparison 21) the tendrils encircling the flamelike plant dominating the design are accentuated as a way of reinforcing the symbiosis of human and divine elements enacted in the text. In the first plate of "The Little Black Boy" (comparison 10), we notice that not only has Blake increased the solar emphasis by adding rays to the sun and rich coloration to the clouds, but he has also converted the delicate covering of the large tree on the left into an impenetrable fan, and rendered barren the sapling on the right. In the second plate of the poem, he reinforces this suggestion by distinguishing between the races of the two children, and he also provides the welcoming Jesus with a halo.

In the *Songs of Experience* in Copy Z Blake devoted considerable attention to deadening the leafless trees that are a conspicuous feature of the sequence. In "A Poison Tree" (comparison 41) he added an eerie fungoid coloring to the two trees, stressing abnormality of shape in the foreground one, then for good measure inserted a sheer rock face at the far right of the scene. In "The Human Abstract" (comparison 54), he converted a tree on the right

Detail from frontispiece to *Songs of Experience* showing alteration of figure.

into a rock face from which straggling saplings emerge. So adept is Blake at overpainting his etched designs that he actually altered the size of figures; compare, for instance, the frontispieces to the *Songs of Innocence* (comparison 2). Similarly, in the frontispiece to the *Songs of Experience* (comparison 28), the head of the little winged boy riding on the shepherd's head is enlarged, and (uniquely to Copy Z) is provided with a suggestive halo.

Comparisons such as these allow us to have an unusually intimate relation with Blake, for we are less expected to study these changes in the detached manner of a student taking notes than we are invited to share in the artist's sense of re-creating his original conception each time he returns to it. By the time he created Copy Z, Blake had been living with these poems and designs for upward of thirty years; yet he returns one last time in his old age to their interplay and gives himself over to a wholly fresh engagement with both their meaning and their aesthetics. The result is, once more, a distinct and indisputable masterpiece.

Although Blake's designs for the *Songs* are relatively small in actual size (the plates measure about 5 inches tall), his formal training as an engraver and experience as an artist are everywhere evident. What is particularly interesting is the underlying abstraction of form, as a brief comparison of the title pages of *Innocence* and *Experience* demonstrates. In both plates we encounter a curious mixture of cursive and roman typography. The styles of the word "Songs" are similar, but in the *Innocence* title page it sprouts leaves and supports four different figures (including one who is writing); it is exuberant and has an imaginative fertility that the same word in the *Experience* title page, though it also sprouts vegetation, cannot sustain. The italicized "Innocence" which likewise supports an artist (in this case, a musician), defines itself against the chiseled roman typography of "Experience," which has a formality on the same scale as the rectilinear architecture and furniture of the deathbed scene below it.

Detail from title page of *Songs of Innocence* (top) and *Songs of Experience* (bottom), Copy C.

Mention has already been made of the pervasive leafless vegetation of *Experience*, but the trees are also juxtaposed in relation to their original appearance in *Innocence*. There they are either enclosing in appearance, arching over the scene depicted below, as in the frontispiece (comparison 2) and "The Lamb" (comparison 7); suggestively protective, as in the first plate of "The Ecchoing Green" (comparison 5); or they are intertwined, as to the right in the frontispiece or in the side panels of the "Introduction" (comparison 4). In *Experience* the trees become forces of constraint and

oppression. The forest trees surrounding the hunched-over figures of "The Little Vagabond" (comparison 39) seem responsible for their being bent down. Similarly, in "A Poison Tree" (comparison 41) a dead figure lies under a heavy, deformed branch; in "The Angel" (comparison 42) the arching willow branches, so graceful in *Innocence,* are transformed into a similitude of whips; and in "The Sick Rose" the enveloping circular structure is laden with thorns.

The natural enclosures of *Innocence* represent safety within a family or acceptance by a caring community; in *Experience* they become claustrophobic and weighty. If we look at how the central text of the poems is positioned in relation to its visual counterpart, throughout *Innocence* Blake interposed vegetation to separate the text from the scene depicted below it. In *Experience*—following the structure of the combined *Songs* title page where a couple resembling Adam and Eve are forced down by raging flames (comparison 1)—the text assumes a similar function of

Detail from title page of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience,* Copy C.

crushing the human figures beneath it in poem after poem: see, for instance, "The Little Vagabond" (comparison 39).

THE TEXTS OF THE POEMS

Committed as he is to the imagination as the essential faculty of the human mind, it may be surprising to find Blake repeating formal structures, but indeed such patterns are also found throughout the poems themselves. The logical difference between the realms of Innocence and Experience reduces exactly to the juxtaposition of questions and answers in "The Lamb" ("Little Lamb who made thee [?] ... Little Lamb I'll tell thee" and the long series of unanswered queries that compose "The Tyger" after its opening description of the beast as "burning bright, / In the forests of the night." The opening line of "The Shepherd"—"How sweet is the shepherd's sweet lot"—is balanced in the two "for" clauses of its second stanza (lines 5, 8), the circular logic perfectly representing the affinity of shepherd and flock.

The world of Innocence seems particularly susceptible to bad logic. As we see with the final lines of "The Chimney Sweeper" ("So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm") and "Holy Thursday" ("Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door"), such logic is how Experience enters Innocence—either through adult deception or the reader's comprehension that unsuspecting children are being duped. Yet, Experience itself is susceptible to similar logical flaws—conspicuously present, for instance, in the second "Holy Thursday" poem—whereby the experienced speaker ironizes himself into flat despair.

For the most part, the poems in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience,* though some have entered into the corpus of literature

for the young, are not remembered for their stylistic facility or their rhetorical strength. Yet, readers return to them again and again. What draws us is the extraordinary pith with which Blake has invested his deceptively simple language. Even the sparest poem—"Infant Joy" (comparison 9)—is without a word in excess or out of place. The sense that one's identity is defined by one's emotional state ("I happy am") is conveyed through inversion with extraordinary economy, a mere eight letters. The reiterated refrain, with its subtle punctuation changes ("Sweet joy befall thee! ... Sweet joy befall thee."), slips from an urgent emotionalism to a deflated hope; experience cannot be kept from encroaching on the charmed life of Innocence, even when it is "but two days old." In the companion poem "Infant Sorrow" we pause at the compacted tension in the common phrase "I thought best" before confronting the resonant but rocklike nugget "to sulk" beginning the next line.

The social, and even political, implications of Blake's *Songs* are worth noting. It may be that the cooperative communities envisioned in *Innocence* are fragile and ultimately unsustainable—the incomplete circle of playing children depicted in the "Nurse's Song" (comparison 17) seems directly related to their desire to stay out of the house as late as possible. But by the time Blake added his *Songs of Experience* in 1793 more than the normal psychological pressures of children maturing are at work: the revolutionary energies unleashed in 1789 had drawn Britain into a war of reaction against France that would last for twenty-two years. From Blake's point of view Great Britain was decidedly on the wrong side, helping to protect established privilege against the just claims of those left outside its closed circle. Now we confront a world in which all the mutual dependencies of *Innocence* are extinguished and nothing comes without a price, where every piece of land is "charter'd" and even the flowing river is rented out as moorage, as Blake depicts it in the first two lines of "London." In *Experience* parents own their children with jealous anger ("A Little Girl Lost"), possessive love turns to hatred ("My Pretty Rose Tree"), and crown and church unite to subjugate those who too readily conceive their identity as subjects of both ("London"). In such a constraining environment innocent openness turns defensive, as in "Infant Sorrow," to counter a social oppression that appears universal.

"Without Contraries is no progression," Blake asserted in plate 3 of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790). The "Contrary States of the Human Soul" of the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience,* however, seem deliberately conceived to question that statement of optimistic faith. If Innocence and Experience are states of mind, they are likewise states of being, and neither is self-sufficient or life-sustaining. It is, Blake implies, the reader's task to convert their unresolved tensions, within each of us and within our cultural conditions, so they prod us toward reconstituting the faith of childhood amid the uncertainties of adulthood. As simple as the individual plates may seem, the *Songs* are the first masterpieces in Blake's lifelong endeavor to build "Jerusalem, / In England's green & pleasant Land."

Portrait of Blake pasted into Copy Z.

STUART CURRAN is Vartan Gregorian Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Pennsylvania. He has written several essays on Blake and coedited, with Joseph Wittreich, *Blake's Sublime Allegory: Essays on* The Four Zoas, Milton, *and* Jerusalem (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973). He also edited the *Cambridge Companion to British Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), to which he contributed essays on the prominence of poetry in the period and on its women writers, the latter subject being one that he pioneered and has since pursued through numerous publications. He has also written widely on Percy Bysshe Shelley, publishing two critical studies and many essays on him, and on Mary Shelley, whose second novel, *Valperga,* he has edited.

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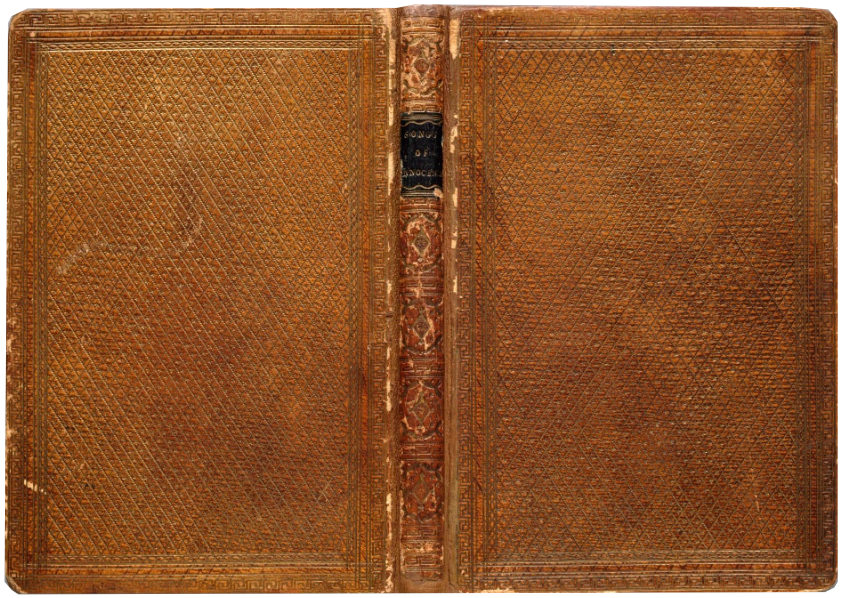
Final plate in Copy C.

Binding and Contents

William Blake: *Songs of Innocence and of Experience.* London: William Blake, 1789 & 1794. Copy C



William Blake is the author, inventor, delineator, etcher, printer, and colorist; Catherine Blake is also printer; and though the separate title pages mention him only as printer, William Blake is also the publisher. The imprint appears on the separate title pages but not the combined one. Although printed at different times as separate copies, *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience,* they were probably joined into this single copy of the combined *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* by Blake. Bentley plate a (plate 54 in this copy) may have been etched in 1789 without reference to either volume.

Binding *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* Copy C is bound in contemporary gilt citron morocco, covers diapered with a star centered in each diamond and framed by three borders, the outer border decorated with greek key motif, the innermost with a chain, spine with greek key along raised bands, six compartments, five richly ornamented with centered gilt rosette on red medallion within gilt lozenge encircled by stars, featherwork draped from corners, second compartment with morocco lettering piece reading 'songs / of / innocence', gilt edges.

The embossed seal of William E. Moss and the gift label of Lessing J. Rosenwald recording the donation to the Library of Congress are on the front pastedown.

Measurements Leaf size 180 × 123 mm. Plate size ranging between 124 × 79 mm and 63 × 52 mm (plate a).

Contents 54 unnumbered plates on 30 leaves (plates 1–4 and 29–30 as arranged in this copy are printed on rectos only): plate 1, frontispiece to *Songs of Innocence;* plate 2, general title; plate 3, title to *Songs of Innocence;* plate 4, 'Introduction'; plate 5, 'Infant Joy'; plate 6, 'The Shepherd'; plate 7, 'A Cradle Song'; plate 8, 'A Cradle Song' (continued); plate 9, 'The Lamb'; plate 10, 'The Blossom'; plate 11, 'Nurse's Song'; plate 12, 'Holy Thursday'; plate 13, 'The Ecchoing Green'; plate 14, 'The Ecchoing Green' (continued); plate 15, 'On Anothers Sorrow'; plate 16, 'Spring'; plate 17, 'Spring' (continued); plate 18, 'The School Boy'; plate 19, 'The Divine Image'; plate 20, 'The Chimney Sweeper'; plate 21, 'Laughing Song'; plate 22, 'The Little Black Boy'; plate 23, 'The Little Black Boy' (continued); plate 24, 'The Voice of the Ancient Bard'; plate 25, 'Night'; plate 26, 'Night' (continued); plate 27, 'The Little Boy Lost'; plate 28, 'The Little Boy Found'; plate 29, frontispiece to *Songs of Experience;*

plate 30, title to *Songs of Experience;* plate 31, 'Introduction'; plate 32, 'Earth's Answer'; plate 33, 'Infant Sorrow'; plate 34, 'A Little Girl Lost'; plate 35, 'Nurses Song'; plate 36, 'The Angel'; plate 37, 'The Sick Rose'; plate 38, 'The Garden of Love'; plate 39, 'The Little Vagabond'; plate 40, 'The Human Abstract'; plate 41, 'A Dream'; plate 42, 'The Little Girl Lost'; plate 43, 'The Little Girl Found'; plate 44, 'The Little Girl Found' (continued); plate 45, 'A Little Boy Lost'; plate 46, 'The Chimney Sweeper'; plate 47, 'The Fly'; plate 48, 'A Poison Tree'; plate 49, 'London'; plate 50, 'The Tyger'; plate 51, 'My Pretty Rose Tree', 'Ah! Sun-flower', and 'The Lilly'; plate 52, 'Holy Thursday'; plate 53, 'The Clod & the Pebble'; plate 54, endplate: nude youth borne through the air by cherubs.

This copy does not contain 'To Tirzah' (plate 52 in Copy Z).

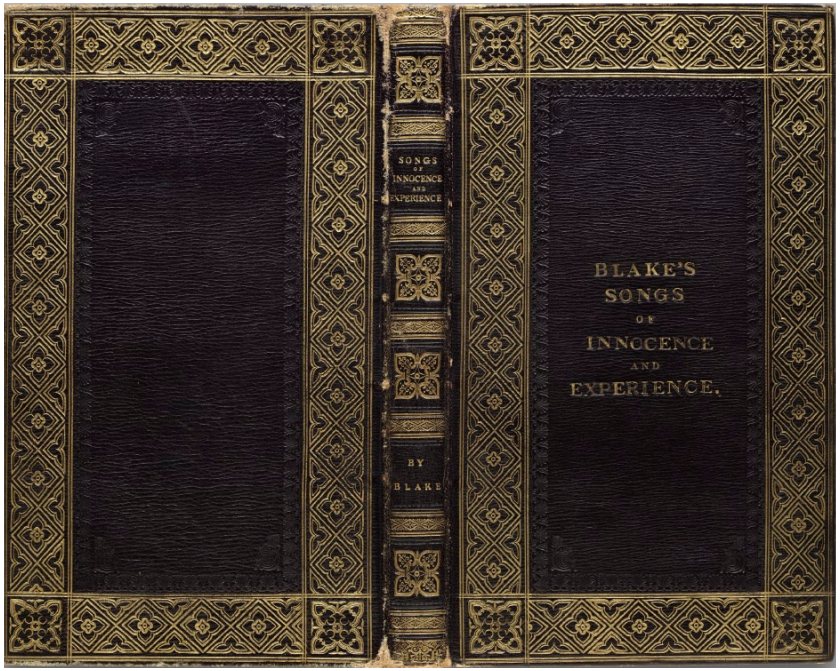
REFERENCES G.E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Books*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1977, p. 413

WILLIAM BLAKE: *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. LONDON: WILLIAM BLAKE, 1826. COPY Z

William Blake is the author, inventor, delineator, etcher, printer, and colorist; Catherine Blake is also printer; and though the separate title pages mention him only as printer, William Blake is also the publisher. The imprint appears on the separate title pages but not the combined one. The print date for this copy is 1826.

BINDING *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* Copy Z is bound in dark purple straight grain levant morocco, gilt-stamped, incorporating variations of quatrefoils, with trefoils, in the wide border to the covers, and quatrefoils in four spine compartments, narrow inner border to cover stamped in blind, front panel with 'BLAKE'S

WILLIAM BLAKE *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* COPY C, LONDON, 1794; COPY Z, LONDON, 1826



/ SONGS / OF / INNOCENCE / AND / EXPERIENCE', spine with 'SONGS / OF / INNOCENCE / AND / EXPERIENCE' in the second compartment and 'BY BLAKE' in the fifth, gilt edges.

The front pastedown bears the bookplate of Henry Crabb Robinson, annotated by him in pencil, "ætat 88 / to / Edwin W Field / 11 Mar 1863," and of Willis Vickery and the gift label of Lessing J. Rosenwald recording the donation to the Library of Congress, and the bookplate of Frank Brewer Bemis is on the front free endpaper.

There are eight fly-leaves in the front, many bearing inscriptions: first fly-leaf, "In ca. 1953 this volume was sent to / Peter Franck to be unbound in order to / have a facsimile made by the Trianon / Press (for the Blake Trust). Upon completion / the book was rebound by Peter Franck / in 1956. Lessing Rosenwald / 2/8/56"; second fly-leaf: "Given to F W Burton / by Mrs Edwin Field / in memory of her / husband– / Oct 6 1871" and "Directed by my uncle Sir / Frederic Burton (when dying) / to be given to / Chas

Fairfax Murray / 20.6.1900 / H B Burton"; sixth fly-leaf: "This copy I received from Blake / himself—And coloured by his own / hand which I present with great pleasure / to Edwin W. Field— / H. C. Robinson / March 11th 1863. / 30 Russell Square / London." Six fly-leaves are at the rear.

There is a photograph, probably a platinotype, of an 1821 watercolor portrait on ivory of Blake by John Linnell mounted on the seventh fly-leaf with the inscription below, "From a miniature by Linnell / by whom this photog. was given to me / Oct 1864 / EW Field." The original miniature is in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge.

This copy, bound for Crabb Robinson about 1826, was rebound by Franck in the same covers. The plates were perhaps mounted on hinges at that time.

MEASUREMENTS Leaf size 216 × 130 mm. Plate size ranging between 124 × 79 mm and 109 × 63 mm.

CONTENTS 54 plates on 54 leaves, numbered in ink by Blake: plate 1, general title; plate 2, frontispiece to *Songs of Innocence;* plate 3, title to *Songs of Innocence;* plate 4, 'Introduction'; plate 5, 'The Shepherd'; plate 6, 'The Ecchoing Green'; plate 7, 'The Ecchoing Green' (continued); plate 8, 'The Lamb'; plate 9, 'The Little Black Boy'; plate 10, 'The Little Black Boy' (continued); plate 11, 'The Blossom'; plate 12, 'The Chimney Sweeper'; plate 13, 'The Little Boy Lost'; plate 14, 'The Little Boy Found'; plate 15, 'Laughing Song'; plate 16, 'A Cradle Song'; plate 17, 'A Cradle Song' (continued); plate 18, 'The Divine Image'; plate 19, 'Holy Thursday'; plate 20, 'Night'; plate 21, 'Night' (continued); plate 22, 'Spring'; plate 23, 'Spring' (continued); plate 24, 'Nurse's Song'; plate 25, 'Infant Joy'; plate 26, 'A Dream'; plate 27, 'On Anothers Sorrow'; plate 28, frontispiece to *Songs of Experience;* plate 29, title to *Songs of Experience;* plate 30, 'Introduction'; plate 31, 'Earth's Answer'; plate 32, 'The Clod & the Pebble'; plate 33, 'Holy Thursday'; plate 34, 'The Little Girl Lost'; plate 35, 'The Little Girl Found'; plate 36, 'The Little Girl Found' (continued); plate 37, 'The Chimney Sweeper'; plate 38, 'Nurses Song'; plate 39, 'The Sick Rose'; plate 40, 'The Fly'; plate 41, 'The Angel'; plate 42, 'The Tyger'; plate 43, 'My Pretty Rose Tree', 'Ah! Sun-flower', and 'The Lilly'; plate 44, 'The Garden of Love'; plate 45, 'The Little Vagabond'; plate 46, 'London'; plate 47, 'The Human Abstract'; plate 48, 'Infant Sorrow'; plate 49, 'A Poison Tree'; plate 50, 'A Little Boy Lost'; plate 51, 'A Little Girl Lost'; plate 52, 'To Tirzah'; plate 53, 'The School Boy'; plate 54, 'The Voice of the Ancient Bard'

REFERENCES G.E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Books*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1977, pp. 424–5.

Geoffrey Keynes, *The Complete Portraiture of William and Catherine Blake*. London: The Trianon Press, 1977, plate 26.

Provenance

So various is the composition and coloring of Blake's illuminated books that each copy must be considered as an individual. To distinguish the different copies (and to place them in rough chronological order) Sir Geoffrey Keynes assigned a letter to each in his *A Bibliography of William Blake* (New York: Grolier Club, 1921), with "A" representing the copy that he considered to be earliest. These letters were adjusted to accord with his revised sense of chronology in the census of *William Blake's Illuminated Books* (New York: Grolier Club) that Keynes published in collaboration with Edwin Wolf 2nd in 1953. In the fifty years since that book, other schemes of dating have been proposed, but scholars have not presumed to shuffle the alphabet again: the letters proposed by Keynes in 1953 remain definitive, if no longer precisely indicative.

COPY C

Nothing is known of the history of Copy C (originally Copy B) before it appeared at auction in London in 1909 as "the property of a clergyman." It is the custom of British auctioneers to distinguish anonymous private owners from anonymous trade consignors by referring to the articles supplied by the former as "the property of a lady," "a gentleman," "a nobleman," or "a clergyman," and by the latter as "other properties." At a time when almost every lot was sold to a bookseller, this was essential information for those who wished to avoid the incestuous purchasing of shopworn goods, and even in today's age of appeal to the private bidder, the terms still serve to distinguish potentially fresh from possibly stale merchandise. The "clergyman"'s copy was sold on March 16th of that year for £166 (then $830) to the London firm of Dobell. Books often appear to change hands immediately after auction sales, either through commission, joint purchase, or "ringing," that is, a conspiracy to increase the private profit of a "ring" of booksellers colluding in the artificial diminution of public competition to the detriment of the consignor—at that time still legal practice in England. For whatever reason, the book was offered for sale five weeks later not by Dobell but in a catalogue from the dealer James Tregaskis, one of the leading Blake specialists of the day. The price was 245 guineas. (The guinea is now obsolete as a coin and even, perhaps, as a concept, for our egalitarian age has dispensed with the social stratification of currency. But while it lasted, the guinea was 5% more than the pound and a more genteel, or professional, measure of value: paintings were customarily sold, and physicians paid, in guineas.)

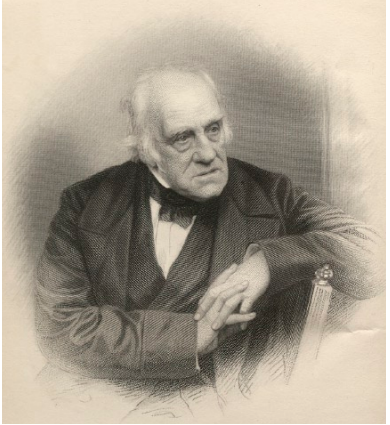
William E. Moss bought the book, adding his embossed seal (he had no bookplate). Lt. Col. Moss (1875–1953) was a leading collector of Blake's books: he also owned *Poetical Sketches, Visions of the Daughters of Albion, Songs of Innocence,* two posthumous printings of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience,* and the American painter Benjamin West's copy of *America*. The volume was sold, along with the rest of Moss' collection, in March of 1937, again at Sotheby's. It was bought by the American dealer A.S.W. Rosenbach for £1400 on behalf of Lessing Rosenwald, who considered it a bargain—he had given the dealer a price limit of £2600. As Rosenbach's biographer (and Keynes' collaborator)

Embossed seal of William E. Moss, from the front pastedown of Copy C.

Edwin Wolf wrote, "The real Blake boom, which Rosenwald did so much to stimulate, was just beginning. Rare separate plates and peripheral material sold for a song at the Moss sale" (*Rosenbach* [Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1960], p. 441). Rosenwald gave the book to the Library of Congress in 1945, but did not surrender possession until 1980.

COPY Z

In contrast to Copy C, the entire history of Copy Z is known from the moment it left Blake's hands until its arrival on the shelves of the Library of Congress. Z was a late copy, bought "from Blake himself— And coloured by his own hand" on December 10, 1825, by Henry Crabb Robinson (1775–1867) for five guineas, rather less than Blake usually charged. Crabb Robinson presumably had the book bound (in purple morocco) shortly afterward, for two of the flyleaves are watermarked 1826.


Henry Crabb Robinson in later life.

Robinson is a figure to whom it is difficult to do justice. He moved in literary circles but had, by his own admission, "no literary talent." Sir Edward Marsh, literary advisor to Winston Churchill and the Georgian poets, and something of a Crabb Robinson himself, dismissed him as "the most pedestrian writer ever" (letter of 1945 to Christopher Hassall, printed in the latter's *Ambrosia and Small Beer* [London: Longmans, 1964], p. 344). Such a reputation is all too easily acquired by any responsible, unimaginative, businesslike person who has been led to associate with improvident grasshopperly genius—Robert Southey's afterfame in relation to Coleridge is a parallel case on a higher plane. Crabb Robinson's view of William Blake as a wild eccentric visionary, an erratic genius, a madman, was commonplace amongst Blake's few admirers in his later years and for much of the nineteenth century. It may not now be politically correct to refer as Crabb Robinson did to Blake's "interesting insanities," but as with chance and destiny, one man's method is another man's madness. Although Blake claimed, on selling this copy to Crabb Robinson, that he had a "horror of money ... turning pale when money had been offered him," a little hard cash to the living has generally been worth more than great dollops of posthumous "understanding."

Crabb Robinson therefore deserves all praise not only for his patronage of Blake but for his invaluable anecdotal records—chiefly through his diary—of his greater contemporaries, especially amongst the Wordsworth circle. He introduced Blake to the German public in the *Vaterländisches Museum* as early as 1811, and finally met him in 1825, thereafter cultivating his society, paying repeated visits, and buying a copy of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (one of three now at the British Museum) and this Rosenwald copy of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. His records of their conversations are "in many ways," according to G.E. Bentley (*Blake Books* [Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1977], p. 21), "the best contemporary record we have of Blake." Although Crabb Robinson did attempt to conceal the nature of Blake's unorthodox views of marriage from prying eyes by transcribing them in German, just as Pepys recorded his amours in a sort of private polyglot, he was nonetheless inclined to savor (if not to share) heterodox opinion. His interest in secular culture and dissenting institutions found

expression in University College, London—"the Godless College on Gower Street" which he helped to establish. He gave his copy of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* along with his *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* to a man of similar tastes, his fellow lawyer Edwin Wilkins Field (1804–71).

An amateur artist and a Unitarian (at a time when it was neither pleasurable nor profitable), Field was an intimate friend of Crabb Robinson and was buried beside him in Highgate Cemetery in London. The two shared an interest not only in legal reform but in John Flaxman, the artist who was described by Blake in 1800 as his "Dearest Friend." Together they founded the Flaxman Gallery of drawings and casts at University College, opened in 1851. Crabb Robinson's inscription to Field is dated March 11, 1863. In the next year (October 1864) Field received a photograph of a miniature portrait of Blake by John Linnell (1792–1882), the intimate friend of the poet's old age, who owned no fewer than twenty-one of Blake's books. The note recording Linnell's gift may be read below the pasted-in photograph.

On October 6, 1871, ten weeks after Field's untimely death by drowning in the River Thames, his widow gave the book in his memory to the Irish watercolorist and antiquary (Sir) Frederick William Burton (1816–1900). Burton was appointed Director of the National Gallery in London in 1874, and never painted again, retiring in 1894. One of the candidates for the directorship after his resignation was Charles Fairfax Murray (1849–1919), the minor Pre-Raphaelite painter and copyist, who was, like Burton, both artist and connoisseur—to which the roles of collector and dealer should be added. Fairfax Murray did not obtain the post, perhaps (as his grandson notes) on account of "his perceived lack of social connections, the blemish of his bowed legs and unfashionable appearance, and the suspicion that attached to his being 'in trade'" (see David B. Elliott, *Charles Fairfax Murray, the Unknown Pre-Raphaelite* [Lewes: The Book Guild, 2000], p. 175). But Burton, at least, did not forget him: on his deathbed, as his niece reported in a letter to Fairfax Murray, "Sir Frederick spoke most highly of you as his friend & appeared most anxious that you should have the book [Copy Z] as a memento." And as a note on the second flyleaf attests, the volume passed into his possession some three months after Sir Frederick's death, on June 20, 1900.

Charles Fairfax Murray, 1902.

Loosely inserted into the book as received by Fairfax Murray was an unbound copy of Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. These leaves were certainly present when the book was owned by Field and may well have been associated with it when originally acquired by Crabb Robinson. Their new owner removed the pages and had them bound, giving the resulting volume (later designated Copy K) to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge in 1912.

Fairfax Murray was a very considerable bibliophile, one of the great connoisseurs of the early illustrated books of Germany and of Italy, especially of the latter where he spent part of each year with one of his two extensive families. His vast collections were dispersed piecemeal over a number of years, the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* being sold, shortly after his death, at Sotheby's on July 7, 1919, for £600 to Frank T. Sabin. "In the rare-book world Sabin did not have—to put it kindly—the best reputation for integrity," as Edwin Wolf noted in the *Papers of the*

Bibliographical Society of America (vol. 84, no. 1 [March 1990], p. 93). He was, for instance, responsible for the confection of the celebrated Kern–Rosenbach copy of the first edition of *Tom Jones*—the eventual subject of a lawsuit by a later purchaser, Lord Rothschild. Sabin took a defective first edition of Fielding's novel, a second edition, twelve old marbled boards, and a razor blade, and came up with a set that Jerome Kern's sale catalogue (1929) described as "A beautiful copy in rare uncut condition, and in sound original binding. Such another copy cannot exist." (The last statement was undoubtedly correct.)

The Cleveland judge Willis Vickery (1859–1932) subsequently bought the book for his collection of English literature from Shakespeare to Wilde, adding his bookplate to the front pastedown. The Blake was one of the *Three Excessively Rare and Scarce Books* that Vickery described in his self-published volume of that title in 1927—the redundant exuberance is characteristic of that over-egged era of naïve enthusiasm. As John Carter noted in his *A B C for Book-Collectors* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1952), a work of deceptively modest title:

> **EXCESSIVELY**
>
> An adverb of enthusiasm, frequently and irritatingly misused with the adjective *rare*. Rarity may be extreme, notorious, ultimate, even legendary; but it cannot be excessive.

Vickery's books were sold in New York some five months after his death, at the American Art Association–Anderson Galleries on March 1, 1933. The Blake volume was sold for $6000 to A.S.W. Rosenbach, from whom the Boston banker Frank Brewer Bemis (1861–1935) bought it, adding his bookplate to the front free endpaper.

Bemis was "possibly the greatest book collector in Boston of this century" according to George Talbot Goodspeed (1903–97) of the old Boston firm (recently extinct) that supplied many of Bemis' books, and eventually dispersed the residue after Rosenbach had skimmed the cream (*The Bookseller's Apprentice* [Philadelphia: Holmes Publishing Company, 1996], p. 27). He had a fine collection of the usual Boston specialty—American and British poets—including Keats, Shelley, and Poe manuscripts, and all four Shakespeare folios in old leather bindings. "His great book collection was not widely known," wrote Goodspeed (p. 119),

Bookplate of Frank Brewer Bemis, from the front free endpaper of Copy Z.

> so that when the city assessors of Beverly valued the contents of his house, they ignored the library entirely. When Mr. Bemis called attention to the omission, the official commented "Oh books. Not worth much are they? Shall we say a quarter a piece?" Bemis allowed as how he thought them worth a bit more than that, and the unit value was accordingly raised to half a dollar.

Amongst these unconsidered trifles were four of Blake's illuminated books. With the rest of the library, they were consigned after his death (under loose and perhaps overly favorable terms) to A.S.W. Rosenbach to be sold for the benefit of Children's Hospital in Boston. Apart from a copy of the *Songs of Innocence* sold to Chauncey Brewster Tinker and now at Yale, the Blake books owned by Bemis—a unique *Milton, The Book of Thel,* and this

copy of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*—went to Lessing Rosenwald. Copy Z was bought in 1938 and given to the Library of Congress along with Copy C in 1945, although the books remained in Rosenwald's possession until 1980. A final handwritten note in the book is Rosenwald's statement indicating that the book was disbound (and rebound) by Peter Franck for purposes of the Trianon Press facsimile published by the William Blake Trust in 1955.

MANUSCRIPT INDEX

In assembling copies, Blake did not distribute his 54 plates uniformly between the *Songs of Innocence* and the *Songs of Experience,* nor did he arrange them in a consistent order. He did at one point write out an index to the plates on a double quarto leaf, but only arranged one copy (on paper watermarked 1818) in accordance with its scheme (see Ephemera view 3). That volume is now at the Morgan Library.

This manuscript index—"The Order in which the Songs of Innocence and Experience ought to be paged"—was bound up with a manuscript copy of Allan Cunningham's life of Blake from volume two of his *The Lives of the Most Eminent British Painters, Sculptors and Architects* (London: John Murray, 1830) along with a miscellaneous collection of single plates by Blake and proofs from *Europe, America, Jerusalem,* and other illuminated books, including *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*—for a list see G.E. Bentley's *Blake Books,* pp. 337–39. The collection was apparently assembled by the dealer George A. Smith around 1853. The number 102 at the top of the first pages of this fragment is a relic of its position at the end of the volume.

The book was sold with Smith's library at Christie's on April 1, 1880, for £66 to the London firm of Bernard Quaritch. It soon passed (by sale or loan) into the hands of William Muir, an enthusiast who produced hand-colored facsimiles of twelve of Blake's books (and two single sheets) in the 1880s, usually in editions of 50 copies. Muir extracted some of the plates and reproduced others in his facsimiles. He published a lithographic facsimile of the index as an appendix to his edition of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1885). Quaritch acted as Muir's agent for most of his facsimile volumes; it was in his *General Catalogue of Books* for November 1882 that the collective volume reappeared, now somewhat gutted, at £80. It was offered again in Quaritch's *General Catalogue* of 1888 before being acquired by Bernard Buchanan MacGeorge of Glasgow, one of the leading Blake collectors of the second generation. The volume was sold (without further diminution) with the rest of his library at Sotheby's on July 1, 1924, for £345, and after cataloguing by Maggs Bros., passed into the possession of the American collector George C. Smith, Jr., the eventual owner of nine Blake books. Smith broke up the assemblage, rebinding most of its constituents separately by source. The manuscript index was accordingly bound up with the trial proofs of nine plates for the *Songs* (on eight leaves). Smith's library was sold at auction at Parke-Bernet in New York on November 2, 1938. A.S.W. Rosenbach bought the index volume for $550 for Lessing Rosenwald, who also acquired seven other items that had once formed part of Smith's composite volume. Along with his other Blake books, Rosenwald gave the index to the Library of Congress in 1945.

THE EDITORS

TRANSCRIPTION

William Blake
Songs of Innocence and of Experience
London, 1794 and 1826

Using Octavo Transcriptions

NOTE Octavo Editions are imaged as page spreads, as if the actual open book were being viewed. In this edition, each spread view of each component is sequentially numbered (as "view 3," etc.) in the Acrobat PDF file. This transcription contains divisions corresponding to the page breaks of the original text. Each section of text has the Acrobat view number and the original page number indicated in the righthand margin, thus:

VIEW 6R: Plate 4

"view 6" refers to the Acrobat image number, shown in the lower left of the image frame, with a "v" or "r" added to the marginal view reference in the transcription to indicate, where necessary, the verso (lefthand) or recto (righthand) page of a spread; "Plate 4" refers to the specific plate number in the book itself (unnumbered preliminary pages are indicated by view number only).

This transcription begins with the front matter and continues consecutively until the end of the text. Plates without text are identified, but blank pages are not indicated in the pagination references. Further information about these books' structure and condition can be found in the Binding and Contents statements and the Provenance note.

Transcription Note

This transcription of copies C (1794) and Z (1826) of Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* has been newly prepared by the editors of this Octavo Edition as a tool to facilitate access to Blake's text. As such, it attempts to replicate the spelling and punctuation of these copies with a minimum of editorial interpretation (although conventionality has been slightly favored in transcribing inconclusive

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characters). No effort has been made to imitate Blake's use of italic letterforms, capitals or larger letters in titles, and similar styles, as these have a resonance and meaning in the hand-lettered originals that is lost or distorted when mimicked in type. Similarly, catchwords are omitted.

Particular mention must be made of Blake's punctuation, which is frequently unorthodox, ambiguous, or indistinct. Even at high magnifications, it is often impossible to clearly distinguish periods from commas, semicolons from colons or exclamation points, and the like. Further, in overpainting the printed text, some punctuation has been changed or obliterated. An attempt has been made here to match such modifications, with the result that the 1794 and 1826 transcriptions differ in accordance with perceived differences in the original copies. The unorthodoxy of Blake's technique prevents any "definitive" determination of orthography.

This transcription makes no claim to authoritative resolution of these difficulties: in all matters of reading and interpretation the user is encouraged to view Blake's plates in their original form—here accessible to all—as the ultimate resource for understanding.

COPY C, 1794

[Binding] view 1

[Frontispiece of piper] view 4v: Plate 1

view 4r: Plate 2

Songs
Of
Innocence
and Of
Experience

Shewing the Two Contrary States
of the Human Soul

view 5r: Plate 3

Songs
of
Innocence

1789

The Author & Printer W Blake

view 6r: Plate 4

Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild
Piping songs of pleasant glee
On a cloud I saw a child.
And he laughing said to me.

Pipe a song about a Lamb:
So I piped with merry chear,
Piper pipe that song again—
So I piped, he wept to hear.

Drop thy pipe thy happy pipe
Sing thy songs of happy chear,
So I sung the same again
While he wept with joy to hear

Piper sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read—

So he vanish'd from my sight.
And I pluck'd a hollow reed.

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs,
Every child may joy to hear

Infant Joy

VIEW 7R: Plate 5

I have no name
I am but two days old.—
What shall I call thee?
I happy am
Joy is my name,—
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee;
Thou dost smile.
I sing the while
Sweet joy befall thee.

The Shepherd.

VIEW 8V: Plate 6

How sweet is the Shepherds sweet lot,
From the morn to the evening he strays:
He shall follow his sheep all the day
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lambs innocent call.
And he hears the ewes tender reply.
He is watchful while they are in peace.
For they know when their Shepherd is nigh.

A Cradle Song

VIEW 8R: Plate 7

Sweet dreams form a shade,
O'er my lovely infants head.
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams,
By happy silent moony beams

Sweet sleep with soft down,
Weave thy brows an infant crown.
Sweet sleep Angel mild,
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles in the night,
Hover over my delight.
Sweet smiles Mothers smiles
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Chase not slumber from thy eyes,
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep sleep happy child.
All creation slept and smil'd,
Sleep sleep, happy sleep,
While o'er thee thy mother weep

Sweet babe in thy face,
Holy image I can trace.
Sweet babe once like thee.
Thy maker lay and wept for me

Wept for me for thee for all.
When he was an infant small.
Thou his image ever see,
Heavenly face that smiles on thee.

Smiles on thee on me on all.
Who became an infant small,
Infant smiles are his own smiles,
Heaven & earth to peace beguiles.

VIEW 9V: Plate 8

The Lamb

VIEW 9R: Plate 9

Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.
By the stream & o'er the mead;

Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing wooly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice;
    Little Lamb who made thee
    Dost thou know who made thee

    Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
    Little Lamb I ll tell thee;
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek & he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
    Little Lamb God bless thee,
    Little Lamb God bless thee.

The Blossom.

VIEW 10V: Plate 10

Merry Merry Sparrow
Under leaves so green
A happy Blossom
Sees you swift as arrow
Seek your cradle narrow
Near my Bosom.

Pretty Pretty Robin
Under leaves so green
A happy Blossom
Hears you sobbing sobbing
Pretty Pretty Robin
Near my Bosom.

Nurse's Song

VIEW 10R: Plate 11

When the voices of children are heard on the green
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast
And everything else is still

Then come home my children the sun is gone down
And the dews of night arise
Come come leave off play, and let us away
Till the morning appears in the skies

No no let us play, for it is yet day
And we cannot go to sleep
Besides in the sky, the little birds fly
And the hills are all coverd with sheep

Well well go & play till the light fades away
And then go home to bed
The little ones leaped & shouted & laugh'd
And all the hills ecchoed

Holy Thursday

VIEW 11V: Plate 12

Twas on a Holy Thursday their innocent faces clean
The children walking two & two in red & blue & green
Grey headed beadles walkd before with wands as white as snow
Till into the high dome of Pauls they like Thames waters flow

O what a multitude they seemd these flowers of London town
Seated in companies they sit with radiance all their own
The hum of multitudes was there but multitudes of lambs
Thousands of little boys & girls raising their innocent hands

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among
Beneath them sit the aged men wise guardians of the poor
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door

The Ecchoing Green

VIEW 11R: Plate 13

The Sun does arise,
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.
The sky-lark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around,
To the bells chearful sound.

While our sports shall be seen
On the Ecchoing Green.

Old John with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk.

They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say,
Such such were the joys,
When we all girls & boys,
In our youth-time were seen,
On the Ecchoing Green.

VIEW 12V: Plate 14

Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end:
Round the laps of their mothers,
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest:
And sport no more seen,
On the darkening Green.

On Anothers Sorrow

VIEW 12R: Plate 15

Can I see anothers woe,
And not be in sorrow too.
Can I see anothers grief.
And not seek for kind relief.

Can I see a falling tear.
And not feel my sorrows share,
Can a father see his child,
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd.

Can a mother sit and hear.
An infant groan an infant fear—
No no never can it be.
Never never can it be.

And can he who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small.
Hear the small birds grief & care
Hear the woes that infants bear—

And not sit beside the nest
Pouring pity in their breast.
And not sit the cradle near
Weeping tear on infants tear.

And not sit both night & day.
Wiping all our tears away.
O! no never can it be.
Never never can it be.

He doth give his joy to all,
He becomes an infant small.
He becomes a man of woe
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not, thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy maker is not by.
Think not, thou canst weep a tear,
And thy maker is not near.

O! he gives to us his joy.
That our grief he may destroy
Till our grief is fled & gone
He doth sit by us and moan

Spring

VIEW 13v: Plate 16

Sound the Flute!
Now it's mute.
Birds delight
Day and Night.
Nightingale
In the dale
Lark in Sky
Merrily
Merrily Merrily to welcome in the Year

Little Boy
Full of joy,

Little Girl
Sweet and small,
Cock does crow
So do you.
Merry voice
Infant noise
Merrily Merrily to welcome in the Year

Little Lamb
Here I am.
Come and lick
My white neck.
Let me pull
Your soft Wool.
Let me kiss
Your soft face.
Merrily Merrily we welcome in the Year

VIEW 13R: Plate 17

The School Boy

VIEW 14V: Plate 18

I love to rise in a summer morn,
When the birds sing on every tree;
The distant huntsman winds his horn,
And the sky-lark sings with me.
O! what sweet company.

But to go to school in a summer morn,
O! it drives all joy away;
Under a cruel eye outworn.
The little ones spend the day,
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit,
And spend many an anxious hour,
Nor in my book can I take delight,
Nor sit in learnings bower,
Worn thro' with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy,
Sit in a cage and sing.
How can a child when fears annoy,
But droop his tender wing,
And forget his youthful spring.

O! father & mother, if buds are nip'd,
And blossoms blown away,
And if the tender plants are strip'd
Of their joy in the springing day,
By sorrow and cares dismay.

How shall the summer arise in joy.
Or the summer fruits appear.
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy
Or bless the mellowing year.
When the blasts of winter appear.

The Divine Image.

VIEW 14R: Plate 19

To Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
All pray in their distress:
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
Is God our father dear;
And Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
Is Man his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart
Pity, a human face:
And Love, the human form divine.
And Peace. the human dress.

Then every man of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine
Love Mercy Pity Peace.

And all must love the human form.
In heathen, turk or jew,

Where Mercy, Love & Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

The Chimney Sweeper

VIEW 15v: Plate 20

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue,
Could scarcely cry weep weep weep weep.
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

Theres little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curl'd like a lambs back, was shav'd, so I said.
Hush Tom never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.

And so he was quiet, & that very night,
As Tom was a sleeping he had such a sight,
That thousands of sweepers Dick, Joe, Ned & Jack
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black,

And by came an Angel who had a bright key
And he open'd the coffins & set them all free.
Then down a green plain leaping laughing they run
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind
And the Angel told Tom if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke and we rose in the dark
And got with our bags & our brushes to work.
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm,
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

Laughing Song

VIEW 15r: Plate 21

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by,
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it.

When the meadows laugh with lively green
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene,
When Mary and Susan and Emily,
With their sweet round mouths sing Ha, Ha, He.

When the painted birds laugh in the shade
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread
Come live & be merry and join with me,
To sing the sweet chorus of Ha, Ha, He.

The Little Black Boy

VIEW 16v: Plate 22

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but O! my soul is white.
White as an angel is the English child:
But I am black as if bereav'd of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree
And sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissed me,
And pointing to the east began to say,

Look on the rising sun! there God does live
And gives his light, and gives his heat away.
And flowers and trees and beasts and men recieve
Comfort in morning joy in the noon day.

And we are put on earth a little space.
That we may learn to bear the beams of love.
And these black bodies and this sun-burnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

VIEW 16r: Plate 23

For when our souls have learn'd the heat to bear
The cloud will vanish. we shall hear his voice.
Saying: come out from the grove my love & care,
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.

Thus did my mother say and kissed me.
And thus I say to little English boy.
When I from black and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy:

Ill shade him from the heat till he can bear,
To lean in joy upon our fathers knee.
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him and he will then love me.

The Voice of the Ancient Bard.

VIEW 17V: Plate 24

Youth of delight come hither,
And see the opening morn,
Image of truth new-born.
Doubt is fled & clouds of reason.
Dark disputes & artful teazing.
Folly is an endless maze,
Tangled roots perplex her ways,
How many have fallen there!
They stumble all night over bones of the dead:
And feel they know not what but care;
And wish to lead others when they should be led.

Night

VIEW 17R: Plate 25

The sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine.
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine,
The moon like a flower,
In heavens high bower;
With silent delight,
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell green fields and happy groves,
Where flocks have took delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are coverd warm;

They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm:
If they see any weeping,
That should have been sleeping
They pour sleep on their head
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tygers howl for prey
They pitying stand and weep;
Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
But if they rush dreadful;
The angels most heedful,
Recieve each mild spirit.
New worlds to inherit.

VIEW 18V: Plate 26

And there the lions' ruddy eyes,
Shall flow with tears of gold:
And pitying the tender cries,
And walking round the fold:
Saying: wrath by his meekness
And by his health, sickness,
Is driven away,
From our immortal day.

And now beside thee bleating lamb,
I can lie down and sleep;
Or think on him who bore thy name.
Graze after thee and weep.
For wash'd in lifes river.
My bright mane for ever.
Shall shine like the gold.
As I guard o'er the fold.

The Little Boy Lost

VIEW 18R: Plate 27

Father, father where are you going
O do not walk so fast.
Speak father speak to your little boy
Or else I shall be lost,

The night was dark no father was there
The child was wet with dew.
The mire was deep, & the child did weep
And away the vapour flew

The Little Boy Found

view 19v: Plate 28

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,
Led by the wand'ring light,
Began to cry, but God ever nigh,
Appeard like his father in white.

He kissed the child & by the hand led
And to his mother brought,
Who in sorrow pale, thro' the lonely dale
Her little boy weeping sought.

[Frontispiece of child on the shepherd's head]

view 20v: Plate 29

view 20r: Plate 30

Songs
of
Experience

1794

The Author & Printer W Blake

Introduction.

view 21r: Plate 31

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who Present, Past, & Future sees
Whose ears have heard,
The Holy Word,
That walk'd among the ancient trees.

Calling the lapsed Soul
And weeping in the evening dew:
That might controll,
The starry pole;
And fallen fallen light renew!

O Earth O Earth return!
Arise from out the dewy grass;

Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumberous mass.

Turn away no more:
Why wilt thou turn away
The starry floor
The watry shore
Is giv'n thee till the break of day.

Earth's Answer.

VIEW 22v: Plate 32

Earth raisd up her head,
From the darkness dread & drear,
Her light fled:
Stony dread!
And her locks cover'd with grey despair.

Prison'd on watry shore
Starry Jealousy does keep my den
Cold and hoar
Weeping o'er
I hear the father of the ancient men

Selfish father of men
Cruel jealous selfish fear
Can delight
Chain'd in night
The virgins of youth and morning bear.

Does spring hide its joy
When buds and blossoms grow?
Does the sower?
Sow by night?
Or the plowman in darkness plow?

Break this heavy chain.
That does freeze my bones around
Selfish! vain!
Eternal bane!
That free Love with bondage bound.

Infant Sorrow

VIEW 22R: Plate 33

My mother groand! my father wept,
Into the dangerous world I leapt:
Helpless, naked, piping loud:
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my fathers hands:
Striving against my swadling bands:
Bound and weary I thought best
To sulk upon my mothers breast.

A Little Girl Lost

VIEW 23V: Plate 34

Children of the future Age,
Reading this indignant page;
Know that in a former time,
Love! sweet Love! was thought a crime.

In the Age of Gold,
Free from winters cold:
Youth and maiden bright.
To the holy light,
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair
Fill'd with softest care;
Met in garden bright,
Where the holy light,
Had just remov'd the curtains of the night.

There in rising day,
On the grass they play:
Parents were afar:
Strangers came not near:
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet
They agree to meet,
When the silent sleep
Waves o'er heavens deep;
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white
Came the maiden bright:
But his loving look,
Like the holy book,
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

Ona! pale and weak!
To thy father speak:
O the trembling fear!
O the dismal care!
That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair

Nurses Song

VIEW 23R: Plate 35

When the voices of children. are heard on the green
And whisprings are in the dale:
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,
My face turns green and pale.

Then come home my children, the sun is gone down
And the dews of night arise
Your spring & your day, are wasted in play
And your winter and night in disguise.

The Angel

VIEW 24V: Plate 36

I Dreamt a Dream! what can it mean?
And that I was a maiden Queen:
Guarded by an Angel mild;
Witless woe, was ne'er beguil'd!

And I wept both night and day
And he wip'd my tears away
And I wept both day and night
And hid from him my hearts delight

So he took his wings and fled:
Then the morn blush'd rosy red:
I dried my tears & arm'd my fears,
With ten thousand shields and spears.

Soon my Angel came again;
I was arm'd, he came in vain:
For the time of youth was fled
And grey hairs were on my head

The Sick Rose

VIEW 24R: Plate 37

O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm.
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

The Garden of Love

VIEW 25V: Plate 38

I went to the Garden of Love.
And saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And Thou shalt not, writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be:
And Priests in black gowns, were walking their rounds,
And binding with briars, my joys & desires.

The Little Vagabond

VIEW 25R: Plate 39

Dear Mother, dear Mother, the Church is cold,
But the Ale-house is healthy & pleasant & warm:
Besides I can tell where I am use'd well,
Such usage in heaven will never do well.

But if at the Church they would give us some Ale,
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale;

We'd sing and we'd pray all the live-long day:
Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the Parson might preach & drink & sing,
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring:
And modest dame Lurch, who is always at Church,
Would not have bandy children nor fasting nor birch.

And God like a father rejoicing to see,
His children as pleasant and happy as he:
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the Barr[el]
But kiss him & give him both drink and apparel.

The Human Abstract.

VIEW 26v: Plate 40

Pity would be no more,
If we did not make somebody Poor:
And Mercy no more could be,
If all were as happy as we;

And mutual fear brings peace;
Till the selfish loves increase.
Then Cruelty knits a snare,
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,
And waters the ground with tears:
Then Humility takes its root
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade
Of Mystery over his head;
And the Catterpiller and Fly,
Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,
Ruddy and sweet to eat;
And the Raven his nest has made
In its thickest shade.

The Gods of the earth and sea,
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree
But their search was all in vain;
There grows one in the Human Brain

A Dream

view 26r: Plate 41

Once a dream did weave a shade,
O'er my Angel-guarded bed,
That an Emmet lost it's way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled wilderd and folorn
Dark benighted travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke I heard her say,

O my children! do they cry,
Do they hear their father sigh,
Now they look abroad to see,
Now return and weep for me.

Pitying I drop'd a tear;
But I saw a glow-worm near:
Who replied. What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night.

I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round:
Follow now the beetles hum,
Little wanderer hie thee home.

The Little Girl Lost

view 27v: Plate 42

In futurity
I prophetic see.
That the earth from sleep.
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise and seek
For her maker meek:
And the desart wild
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,
Where the summers prime,
Never fades away;
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old
Lovely Lyca told,
She had wanderd long.
Hearing wild birds song.

Sweet sleep come to me
Underneath this tree;
Do father, mother weep.—
"Where can Lyca sleep".

Lost in desart wild
Is your little child.
How can Lyca sleep.
If her mother weep.

If her heart does ake,
Then let Lyca wake;
If my mother sleep,
Lyca shall not weep.

Frowning frowning night,
O'er this desart bright,
Let thy moon arise,
While I close my eyes.

Sleeping Lyca lay:
While the beasts of prey,
Come from caverns deep,
View'd the maid asleep

The kingly lion stood
And the virgin view'd,
Then he gambold round
O'er the hallowd ground;

Leopards, tygers play,
Round her as she lay;
While the lion old,
Bow'd his mane of gold,

And her bosom lick,
And upon her neck,

VIEW 27R: Plate 43

From his eyes of flame,
Ruby tears there came;

While the lioness,
Loos'd her slender dress,
And naked they convey'd
To caves the sleeping maid.

The Little Girl Found

All the night in woe,
Lyca's parents go:
Over vallies deep,
While the desarts weep.

Tired and woe-begone,
Hoarse with making moan:
Arm in arm seven days,
They trac'd the desart ways.

Seven nights they sleep.
Among shadows deep:
And dream they see their child
Starv'd in desart wild,

Pale thro' pathless ways
The fancied image strays.

Famish'd, weeping, weak
With hollow piteous shriek.

view 28v: Plate 44

Rising from unrest,
The trembling woman prest,
With feet of weary woe;
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore,
Her arm'd with sorrow sore:
Till before their way,
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain,
Soon his heavy mane,

Bore them to the ground;
Then he stalk'd around.

Smelling to his prey,
But their fears allay,
When he licks their hands:
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes
Fill'd with deep surprise:
And wondering behold,
A Spirit arm'd in gold.

On his head a crown
On his shoulders down,
Flow'd his golden hair,
Gone was all their care.

Follow me he said,
Weep not for the maid;
In my palace deep,
Lyca lies asleep.

Then they followed.
Where the vision led;
And saw their sleeping child,
Among tygers wild.

To this day they dwell
In a lonely dell
Nor fear the wolvish howl,
Nor the lions growl.

A Little Boy Lost

VIEW 28R: Plate 45

Nought loves another as itself
Nor venerates another so.
Nor is it possible to thought
A greater than itself to know:

And Father, how can I love you,
Or any of my brothers more?
I love you like the little bird
That picks up crumbs around the door.

The Priest sat by and heard the child.
In trembling zeal he siez'd his hair:
He led him by his little coat:
And all admir'd the Priestly care.

And standing on the altar high.
Lo what a fiend is here! said he:
One who sets reason up for judge
Of our most holy Mystery.

The weeping child could not be heard,
The weeping parents wept in vain:
They strip'd him to his little shirt.
And bound him in an iron chain.

And burn'd him in a holy place.
Where many had been burn'd before:
The weeping parents wept in vain.
Are such things done on Albions shore.

The Chimney Sweeper

VIEW 29V: Plate 46

A little black thing among the snow:
Crying weep, weep, in notes of woe!
Where are thy father & mother? say?
They are both gone up to the church to pray.

Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil'd among the winters snow:
They clothed me in the clothes of death.
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

And because I am happy, & dance & sing,
They think they have done me no injury:
And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King
Who make up a heaven of our misery.

The Fly.

VIEW 29R: Plate 47

Little Fly
Thy summers play,
My thoughtless hand
Has brush'd away.

Am not I
A fly like thee?
Or art not thou
A man like me?

For I dance
And drink & sing:
Till some blind hand
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life
And strength & breath;
And the want
Of thought is death;

Then am I
A happy fly,
If I live,
Or if I die.

A Poison Tree.

VIEW 30v: Plate 48

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not. my wrath did grow.

And I waterd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole.
When the night had veild the pole;
In the morning glad I see;
My foe outstretchd beneath the tree.

London

view 30r: Plate 49

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe,

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear.
In every voice; in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blacknng Church appalls.
And the hapless Soldiers sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse

The Tyger.

view 31v: Plate 50

Tyger Tyger. burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare sieze the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp:

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

My Pretty Rose Tree

VIEW 31R: Plate 51

A flower was offerd to me;
Such a flower as May never bore.
But I said I've a Pretty Rose-tree,
And I passed the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my Pretty Rose-tree:
To tend her by day and by night.
But my Rose turnd away with jealousy:
And her thorns were my only delight.

Ah! Sun-flower

Ah Sun-flower! weary of time.
Who countest the steps of the Sun;
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the travellers journey is done.

Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow:
Arise from their graves and aspire.
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

The Lilly

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn:
The humble Sheep, a threatning horn:
While the Lilly white, shall in Love delight,
Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright

Holy Thursday

VIEW 32V: Plate 52

Is this a holy thing to see,
In a rich and fruitful land,
Babes reducd to misery,
Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?
Can it be a song of joy?
And so many children poor?
It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine.
And their fields are bleak & bare.
And their ways are fill'd with thorns,
It is eternal winter there.

For where-e'er the sun does shine,
And where-e'er the rain does fall:
Babe can never hunger there,
Nor poverty the mind appall.

The Clod & the Pebble

VIEW 32R: Plate 53

Love seeketh not Itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care;
But for another gives its ease.
And builds a Heaven in Hells despair.

So sang a little Clod of Clay,
Trodden with the cattles feet:
But a Pebble of the brook,
Warbled out these metres meet.

Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to Its delight;
Joys in anothers loss of ease,
And builds a Hell in Heavens despite.

[Final plate]

VIEW 33V: Plate 54

COPY Z, 1826

[Binding] VIEW 1

[Verso inscription (on bookplate): "ætat 88 to Edwin W Field 11 Mar 1863"] VIEW 2

[Verso inscription: "In ca. 1953 this volume was sent to Peter Franck to be unbound in order to have a facsimile made by the Trianon Press (for the Blake Trust). Upon completion the book was rebound by Peter Franck in 1956. Lessing Rosenwald 2/8/56"] VIEW 3

[Recto inscriptions: "Given to F W Burton by Mrs Edwin Field in memory of her husband. Oct 6 1871"; "Directed by my uncle Sir Frederic Burton (when dying) to be given to Chas Fairfax Murray 20.6.1900 H B Burton"]

[Recto inscription: "This copy I received from Blake himself— And coloured by his own hand which I present with great pleasure to Edwin W. Field— H. C. Robinson March 11th 1863. 30 Russell Square London."] VIEW 7

[Recto: Mounted photograph of a portrait of Blake] VIEW 8
[Inscription: "From a miniature by Linnell by whom this photog. was given to me. Oct 1864 EW Field"]

Songs
Of
Innocence
and Of
Experience

Shewing the Two Contrary States
of the Human Soul

VIEW 10: Plate 1

[Frontispiece of piper] VIEW 11: Plate 2

Songs
of
Innocence

1789

The Author & Printer W Blake

VIEW 12: Plate 3

Introduction

VIEW 13: Plate 4

Piping down the valleys wild
Piping songs of pleasant glee
On a cloud I saw a child.
And he laughing said to me.

Pipe a song about a Lamb:
So I piped with merry chear,
Piper pipe that song again—
So I piped, he wept to hear.

Drop thy pipe thy happy pipe
Sing thy songs of happy chear,
So I sung the same again
While he wept with joy to hear

Piper sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read—
So he vanish'd from my sight
And I pluck'd a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs,
Every child may joy to hear

The Shepherd.

VIEW 14: Plate 5

How sweet is the Shepherds sweet lot
From the morn to the evening he strays;
He shall follow his sheep all the day
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lambs innocent call.
And he hears the ewes tender reply.
He is watchful while they are in peace.
For they know when their Shepherd is nigh.

The Ecchoing Green

VIEW 15: Plate 6

The Sun does arise
And make happy the skies

The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.
The sky-lark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around.
To the bells chearful sound.
While our sports shall be seen,
On the Ecchoing Green.

Old John with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk.

They laugh at our play.
And soon they all say
Such such were the joys.
When we all girls & boys.
In our youth-time were seen,
On the Ecchoing Green.

VIEW 16: Plate 7

Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry
The sun does descend.
And our sports have an end:
Round the laps of their mothers.
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest:
And sport no more seen.
On the darkening Green.

The Lamb

VIEW 17: Plate 8

Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing wooly bright;

Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice:
    Little Lamb who made thee
    Dost thou know who made thee

    Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
    Little Lamb I ll tell thee;
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek & he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
    Little Lamb God bless thee,
    Little Lamb God bless thee

The Little Black Boy

VIEW 18: Plate 9

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but O! my soul is white.
White as an angel is the English child:
But I am black as if bereav'd of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree
And sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissed me,
And pointing to the east began to say,

Look on the rising sun: there God does live
And gives his light. and gives his heat away.
And flowers and trees and beasts and men reciev
Comfort in morning joy in the noon day.

And we are put on earth a little space
That we may learn to bear the beams of love,
And these black bodies and this sun-burnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

VIEW 19: Plate 10

For when our souls have learn'd the heat to bear
The cloud will vanish we shall hear his voice.
Saying: come out from the grove my love & care.
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.

Thus did my mother say and kissed me.
And thus I say to little English boy.
When I from black and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy:

Ill shade him from the heat till he can bear,
To lean in joy upon our fathers knee.
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair.
And be like him and he will then love me.

The Blossom.

VIEW 20: Plate 11

Merry Merry Sparrow
Under leaves so green
A happy Blossom
Sees you swift as arrow
Seek your cradle narrow
Near my Bosom.

Pretty Pretty Robin
Under leaves so green
A happy Blossom
Hears you sobbing sobbing
Pretty Pretty Robin
Near my Bosom.

The Chimney Sweeper

VIEW 21: Plate 12

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue,
Could scarcely cry weep weep weep weep.
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

Theres little Tom Dacre. who cried when his head
That curl'd like a lambs back, was shav'd, so I said.
Hush Tom never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.

And so he was quiet, & that very night,
As Tom was a sleeping he had such a sight,
That thousands of sweepers Dick, Joe, Ned & Jack
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black

And by came an Angel who had a bright key
And he open'd the coffins & set them all free.
Then down a green plain leaping laughing they run
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.
And the Angel told Tom if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke and we rose in the dark
And got with our bags & our brushes to work.
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

The Little Boy Lost

VIEW 22: Plate 13

Father, father where are you going
O do not walk so fast.
Speak father, speak to your little boy
Or else I shall be lost,

The night was dark no father was there
The child was wet with dew.
The mire was deep, & the child did weep
And away the vapour flew

The Little Boy Found

VIEW 23: Plate 14

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,
Led by the wand'ring light,
Began to cry, but God ever nigh,
Appeard like his father in white.

He kissed the child & by the hand led
And to his mother brought,
Who in sorrow pale, thro' the lonely dale
Her little boy weeping sought.

Laughing Song

VIEW 24: Plate 15

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by,

When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it.

When the meadows laugh with lively green
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene,
When Mary and Susan and Emily,
With their sweet round mouths sing Ha, Ha, He.

When the painted birds laugh in the shade
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread
Come live & be merry and join with me,
To sing the sweet chorus of Ha Ha He.

A Cradle Song

VIEW 25: Plate 16

Sweet dreams form a shade,
O'er my lovely infants head.
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams,
By happy silent moony beams

Sweet sleep with soft down,
Weave thy brows an infant crown.
Sweet sleep Angel mild,
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles in the night,
Hover over my delight.
Sweet smiles Mothers smiles
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Chase not slumber from thy eyes,
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep sleep happy child.
All creation slept and smil'd,
Sleep sleep, happy sleep,
While o'er thee thy mother weep

Sweet babe in thy face,
Holy image I can trace.
Sweet babe once like thee.
Thy maker lay and wept for me

Wept for me for thee for all.
When he was an infant small.
Thou his image ever see.
Heavenly face that smiles on thee.

Smiles on thee on me on all.
Who became an infant small,
Infant smiles are his own smiles.
Heaven & earth to peace beguiles.

VIEW 26: Plate 17

The Divine Image.

VIEW 27: Plate 18

To Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
All pray in their distress:
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
Is God our father dear:
And Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
Is Man his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart
Pity, a human face:
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine
Love Mercy Pity Peace.

And all must love the human form.
In heathen, turk or jew.
Where Mercy, Love & Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

Holy Thursday

VIEW 28: Plate 19

Twas on a Holy Thursday their innocent faces clean
The children walking two & two in red & blue & green
Grey headed beadles walkd before with wands as white as snow
Till into the high dome of Pauls they like Thames waters flow

O what a multitude they seemd these flowers of London town
Seated in companies they sit with radiance all their own
The hum of multitudes was there but multitudes of lambs
Thousands of little boys & girls raising their innocent hands

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among
Beneath them sit the aged men wise guardians of the poor
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door

Night

VIEW 29: Plate 20

The sun descending in the west.
The evening star does shine.
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine,
The moon like a flower,
In heavens high bower;
With silent delight,
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell green fields and happy groves,
Where flocks have took delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are coverd warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm:
If they see any weeping,
That should have been sleeping
They pour sleep on their head
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tygers howl for prey
They pitying stand and weep;

VIEW 30: Plate 21

Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
But if they rush dreadful;
The angels most heedful,
Recieve each mild spirit.
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lions ruddy eyes,
Shall flow with tears of gold;
And pitying the tender cries,
And walking round the fold:
Saying: wrath by his meekness
And by his health, sickness.
Is driven away.
From our immortal day.

And now beside thee bleating lamb.
I can lie down and sleep;
Or think on him who bore thy name.
Graze after thee and weep.
For wash'd in lifes river.
My bright mane for ever.
Shall shine like the gold.
As I guard o'er the fold.

Spring

VIEW 31: Plate 22

Sound the Flute!
Now it's mute.
Birds delight
Day and Night.
Nightingale
In the dale
Lark in Sky
Merrily
Merrily Merrily to welcome in the Year

Little Boy
Full of joy.

Little Girl
Sweet and small,
Cock does crow
So do you.
Merry voice
Infant noise
Merrily Merrily to welcome in the Year

Little Lamb
Here I am.
Come and lick
My white neck.
Let me pull
Your soft Wool.
Let me kiss
Your soft face.
Merrily Merrily we welcome in the Year

VIEW 32: Plate 23

Nurse's Song

VIEW 33: Plate 24

When the voices of children are heard on the green
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast
And everything else is still

Then come home my children the sun is gone down
And the dews of night arise
Come come leave off play, and let us away
Till the morning appears in the skies

No no let us play, for it is yet day
And we cannot go to sleep
Besides in the sky, the little birds fly
And the hills are all coverd with sheep

Well well go & play till the light fades away
And then go home to bed
The little ones leaped & shouted & laugh'd
And all the hills ecchoed

Infant Joy

VIEW 34: Plate 25

I have no name
I am but two days old.—
What shall I call thee?
I happy am
Joy is my name,—
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee;
Thou dost smile.
I sing the while
Sweet joy befall thee.

A Dream

VIEW 35: Plate 26

Once a dream did weave a shade,
O'er my Angel-guarded bed,
That an Emmet lost it's way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled wilderd and folorn
Dark benighted travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke I heard her say,

O my children! do they cry,
Do they hear their father sigh.
Now they look abroad to see,
Now return and weep for me.

Pitying I drop'd a tear;
But I saw a glow-worm near:
Who replied. What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night.

I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round:
Follow now the beetles hum,
Little wanderer hie thee home.

Octavo

On Anothers Sorrow

Can I see anothers woe,
And not be in sorrow too.
Can I see anothers grief,
And not seek for kind relief.

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrows share,
Can a father see his child,
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd.

Can a mother sit and hear.
An infant groan an infant fear—
No no never can it be.
Never never can it be.

And can he who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small.
Hear the small birds grief & care
Hear the woes that infants bear—

And not sit beside the nest
Pouring pity in their breast.
And not sit the cradle near
Weeping tear on infants tear.

And not sit both night & day.
Wiping all our tears away.
O! no never can it be.
Never never can it be.

He doth give his joy to all,
He becomes an infant small,
He becomes a man of woe
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not, thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy maker is not by.
Think not, thou canst weep a tear,
And thy maker is not near.

O! he gives to us his joy.
That our grief he may destroy

Till our grief is fled & gone
He doth sit by us and moan

[Frontispiece of child on the shepherd's head]

view 37: Plate 28

view 38: Plate 29

Songs
of
Experience

1794

The Author & Printer W Blake

Introduction.

view 39: Plate 30

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who Present, Past, & Future sees
Whose ears have heard,
The Holy Word,
That walk'd among the ancient trees.

Calling the lapsed Soul
And weeping in the evening dew;
That might controll,
The starry pole;
And fallen fallen light renew!

O Earth O Earth return!
Arise from out the dewy grass;
Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumberous mass.

Turn away no more:
Why wilt thou turn away
The starry floor
The watry shore
Is giv'n thee till the break of day.

Earth's Answer.

view 40: Plate 31

Earth rais'd up her head,
From the darkness dread & drear.

Her light fled:
Stony dread!
And her locks cover'd with grey despair,

Prison'd on watry shore
Starry Jealousy does keep my den
Cold and hoar
Weeping o'er
I hear the Father of the ancient men

Selfish father of men
Cruel jealous selfish fear
Can delight
Chain'd in night
The virgins of youth and morning bear.

Does spring hide its joy
When buds and blossoms grow?
Does the sower?
Sow by night?
Or the plowman in darkness plow?

Break this heavy chain.
That does freeze my bones around
Selfish! vain!
Eternal bane!
That free Love with bondage bound.

The Clod & the Pebble

VIEW 41: Plate 32

Love seeketh not Itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care;
But for another gives its ease.
And builds a Heaven in Hells despair.

So sang a little Clod of Clay,
Trodden with the cattles feet:
But a Pebble of the brook,
Warbled out these metres meet.

Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to its delight;

Joys in anothers loss of ease,
And builds a Hell in Heavens despite.

Holy Thursday

VIEW 42: Plate 33

Is this a holy thing to see
In a rich and fruitful land,
Babes reducd to misery
Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?
Can it be a song of joy?
And so many children poor?
It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine.
And their fields are bleak & bare.
And their ways are fill'd with thorns
It is eternal winter there.

For where-e'er the sun does shine,
And where-e'er the rain does fall:
Babe can never hunger there,
Nor poverty the mind appall.

The Little Girl Lost

VIEW 43: Plate 34

In futurity
I prophetic see.
That the earth from sleep.
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise and seek
For her maker meek:
And the desart wild
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,
Where the summers prime,
Never fades away;
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old
Lovely Lyca told,

She had wanderd long.
Hearing wild birds song.

Sweet sleep come to me
Underneath this tree;
Do father, mother weep.—
"Where can Lyca sleep".

Lost in desart wild
Is your little child.
How can Lyca sleep.
If her mother weep.

If her heart does ake,
Then let Lyca wake;
If my mother sleep,
Lyca shall not weep.

Frowning frowning night,
O'er this desart bright,
Let thy moon arise,
While I close my eyes.

Sleeping Lyca lay;
While the beasts of prey,
Come from caverns deep,
View'd the maid asleep

The kingly lion stood
And the virgin view'd,
Then he gambold round
O'er the hallowd ground;

Leopards, tygers play,
Round her as she lay;
While the lion old,
Bow'd his mane of gold,

And her bosom lick,
And upon her neck,
From his eyes of flame,
Ruby tears there came;

VIEW 44: Plate 35

While the lioness,
Loos'd her slender dress,
And naked they convey'd
To caves the sleeping maid.

The Little Girl Found

All the night in woe,
Lyca's parents go:
Over vallies deep,
While the desarts weep.

Tired and woe-begone.
Hoarse with making moan:
Arm in arm seven days,
They trac'd the desart ways.

Seven nights they sleep.
Among shadows deep:
And dream they see their child
Starv'd in desart wild,

Pale thro' pathless ways
The fancied image strays.

Famish'd, weeping, weak
With hollow piteous shriek

Rising from unrest,
The trembling woman prest,
With feet of weary woe;
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore,
Her arm'd with sorrow sore:
Till before their way,
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain,
Soon his heavy mane,
Bore them to the ground;
Then he stalk'd around.

VIEW 45: Plate 36

Smelling to his prey.
But their fears allay,
When he licks their hands:
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes
Fill'd with deep surprise:
And wondering behold,
A Spirit arm'd in gold.

On his head a crown
On his shoulders down,
Flow'd his golden hair,
Gone was all their care.

Follow me he said,
Weep not for the maid;
In my palace deep,
Lyca lies asleep.

Then they followed,
Where the vision led;
And saw their sleeping child,
Among tygers wild.

To this day they dwell
In a lonely dell
Nor fear the wolvish howl,
Nor the lions growl.

The Chimney Sweeper

VIEW 46: Plate 37

A little black thing among the snow:
Crying weep, weep, in notes of woe!
Where are thy father & mother? say?
They are both gone up to the church to pray.

Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil'd among the winters snow:
They clothed me in the clothes of death,
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

And because I am happy, & dance & sing.
They think they have done me no injury:
And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King
Who make up a heaven of our misery.

Nurses Song

VIEW 47: Plate 38

When the voices of children. are heard on the green
And whisprings are in the dale:
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,
My face turns green and pale.

Then come home my children. the sun is gone down
And the dews of night arise
Your spring & your day. are wasted in play
And your winter and night in disguise.

The Sick Rose

VIEW 48: Plate 39

O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm.
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

The Fly.

VIEW 49: Plate 40

Little Fly
Thy summers play,
My thoughtless hand
Has brush'd away.

Am not I
A fly like thee?
Or art not thou
A man like me?

For I dance
And drink & sing:

Till some blind hand
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life
And strength & breath;
And the want
Of thought is death;

Then am I
A happy fly,
If I live,
Or if I die.

The Angel

VIEW 50: Plate 41

I Dreamt a Dream! what can it mean?
And that I was a maiden Queen:
Guarded by an Angel mild;
Witless woe, was ne'er beguil'd!

And I wept both night and day
And he wip'd my tears away
And I wept both day and night
And hid from him my hearts delight

So he took his wings and fled:
Then the morn blush'd rosy red:
I dried my tears & arm'd my fears,
With ten thousand shields and spears

Soon my Angel came again;
I was arm'd, he came in vain:
For the time of youth was fled
And grey hairs were on my head.

The Tyger.

VIEW 51: Plate 42

Tyger Tyger. burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare sieze the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp:

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

My Pretty Rose Tree

VIEW 52: Plate 43

A flower was offerd to me;
Such a flower as May never bore.
But I said I've a Pretty Rose-tree,
And I passed the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my Pretty Rose-tree:
To tend her by day and by night.
But my Rose turnd away with jealousy:
And her thorns were my only delight.

Ah! Sun-flower

Ah Sun-flower! weary of time.
Who countest the steps of the Sun:
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the travellers journey is done.

Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow:
Arise from their graves and aspire.
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

The Lilly

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn:
The humble Sheep, a threatning horn:
While the Lilly white, shall in Love delight,
Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright

The Garden of Love

VIEW 53: Plate 44

I went to the Garden of Love.
And saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And Thou shalt not, writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be:
And Priests in black gowns, were walking their rounds,
And binding with briars, my joys & desires.

The Little Vagabond

VIEW 54: Plate 45

Does Mother, dear Mother, the Church is cold,
But the Ale-house is healthy & pleasant & warm:
Besides I can tell where I am use'd well,
Such usage in heaven will never do well.

But if at the Church they would give us some Ale.
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale;
We'd sing and we'd pray all the live-long day:
Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the Parson might preach & drink & sing,
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring:

And modest dame Lurch, who is always at Church,
Would not have bandy children nor fasting nor birch.

And God like a father rejoicing to see,
His children as pleasant and happy as he:
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the Barrel
But kiss him & give him both drink and apparel.

London

VIEW 55: Plate 46

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man.
In every Infants cry of fear.
In every voice: in every ban.
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls.
And the hapless Soldiers sigh.
Runs in blood down Palace walls

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse

The Human Abstract.

VIEW 56: Plate 47

Pity would be no more,
If we did not make somebody Poor:
And Mercy no more could be,
If all were as happy as we;

And mutual fear brings peace;
Till the selfish loves increase.
Then Cruelty knits a snare,
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,
And waters the ground with tears:
Then Humility takes its root
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade
Of Mystery over his head;
And the Catterpiller and Fly,
Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,
Ruddy and sweet to eat;
And the Raven his nest has made
In its thickest shade.

The Gods of the earth and sea,
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree
But their search was all in vain;
There grows one in the Human Brain

Infant Sorrow

VIEW 57: Plate 48

My mother groand! my father wept,
Into the dangerous world I leapt:
Helpless, naked, piping loud:
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my fathers hands:
Striving against my swadling bands:
Bound and weary I thought best
To sulk upon my mothers breast.

A Poison Tree.

VIEW 58: Plate 49

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not. my wrath did grow.

And I waterd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole.
When the night had veild the pole;
In the morning glad I see;
My foe outstretchd beneath the tree.

A Little Boy Lost

view 59: Plate 50

Nought loves another as itself
Nor venerates another so.
Nor is it possible to thought
A greater than itself to know:

And Father, how can I love you,
Or any of my brothers more?
I love you like the little bird
That picks up crumbs around the door.

The Priest sat by and heard the child.
In trembling zeal he siez'd his hair:
He led him by his little coat:
And all admir'd the Priestly care.

And standing on the altar high.
Lo what a fiend is here! said he:
One who sets reason up for judge
Of our most holy Mystery.

The weeping child could not be heard,
The weeping parents wept in vain:
They strip'd him to his little shirt.
And bound him in an iron chain.

And burn'd him in a holy place.
Where many had been burn'd before:
The weeping parents wept in vain.
Are such things done on Albions shore.

A Little Girl Lost

VIEW 60: Plate 51

Children of the future Age,
Reading this indignant page;
Know that in a former time,
Love! sweet Love! was thought a crime.

In the Age of Gold,
Free from winters cold:
Youth and maiden bright,
To the holy light,
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair
Fill'd with softest care;
Met in garden bright.
Where the holy light,
Had just removd the curtains of the night.

There in rising day,
On the grass they play:
Parents were afar:
Strangers came not near:
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet
They agree to meet,
When the silent sleep
Waves o'er heavens deep:
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white
Came the maiden bright:
But his loving look,
Like the holy book,
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

Ona! pale and weak!
To thy father speak:
O the trembling fear!
O the dismal care!
That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair

Octavo

To Tirzah

VIEW 61: Plate 52

Whate'er is Born of Mortal Birth,
Must be consumed with the Earth
To rise from Generation free:
Then what have I to do with thee?

The Sexes sprung from Shame & Pride
Blow'd in the morn; in evening died
But Mercy changd Death into Sleep;
The Sexes rose to work & weep.

Thou Mother of my Mortal part.
With cruelty didst mould my Heart.
And with false self-decieving tears.
Didst bind my Nostrils Eyes & Ears

Didst close my Tongue in senseless clay
And me to Mortal Life betray:
The Death of Jesus set me free,
Then what have I to do with thee?

It is Raised
a Spiritual Body

The School Boy

VIEW 62: Plate 53

I love to rise in a summer morn,
When the birds sing on every tree;
The distant huntsman winds his horn,
And the sky-lark sings with me.
O! what sweet company.

But to go to school in a summer morn,
O! it drives all joy away;
Under a cruel eye outworn.
The little ones spend the day,
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit,
And spend many an anxious hour,
Nor in my book can I take delight,
Nor sit in learnings bower,
Worn thro' with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy,
Sit in a cage and sing.
How can a child when fears annoy.
But droop his tender wing.
And forget his youthful spring.

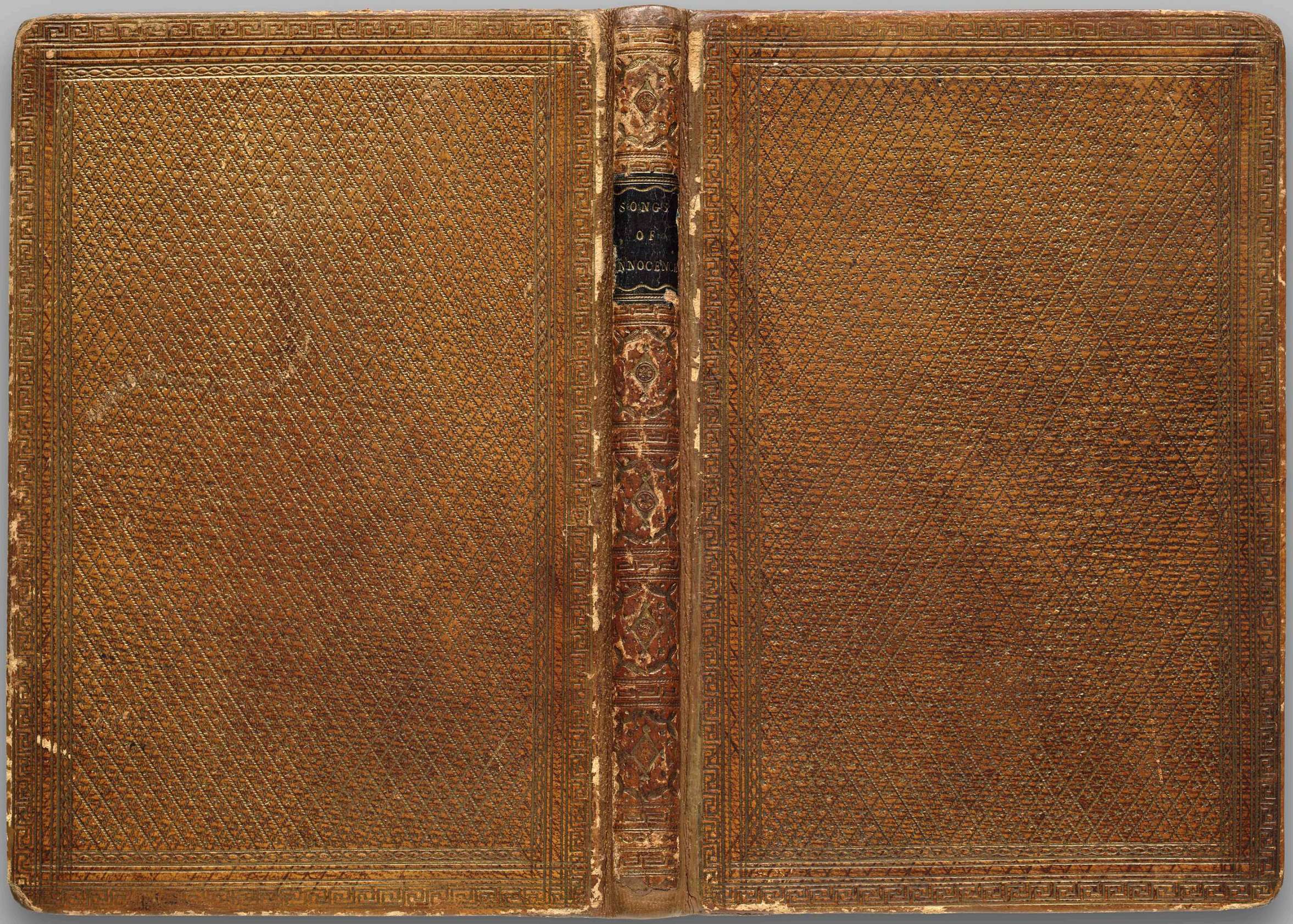
O! father & mother, if buds are nip'd,
And blossoms blown away,
And if the tender plants are strip'd
Of their joy in the springing day,
By sorrow and cares dismay.

How shall the summer arise in joy.
Or the summer fruits appear.
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy
Or bless the mellowing year.
When the blasts of winter appear.

The Voice of the Ancient Bard.

VIEW 63: Plate 54

Youth of delight come hither,
And see the opening morn,
Image of truth new born.
Doubt is fled & clouds of reason.
Dark disputes & artful teazing.
Folly is an endless maze,
Tangled roots perplex her ways,
How many have fallen there!
They stumble all night over bones of the dead
And feel they know not what but care;
And wish to lead others when they should be led



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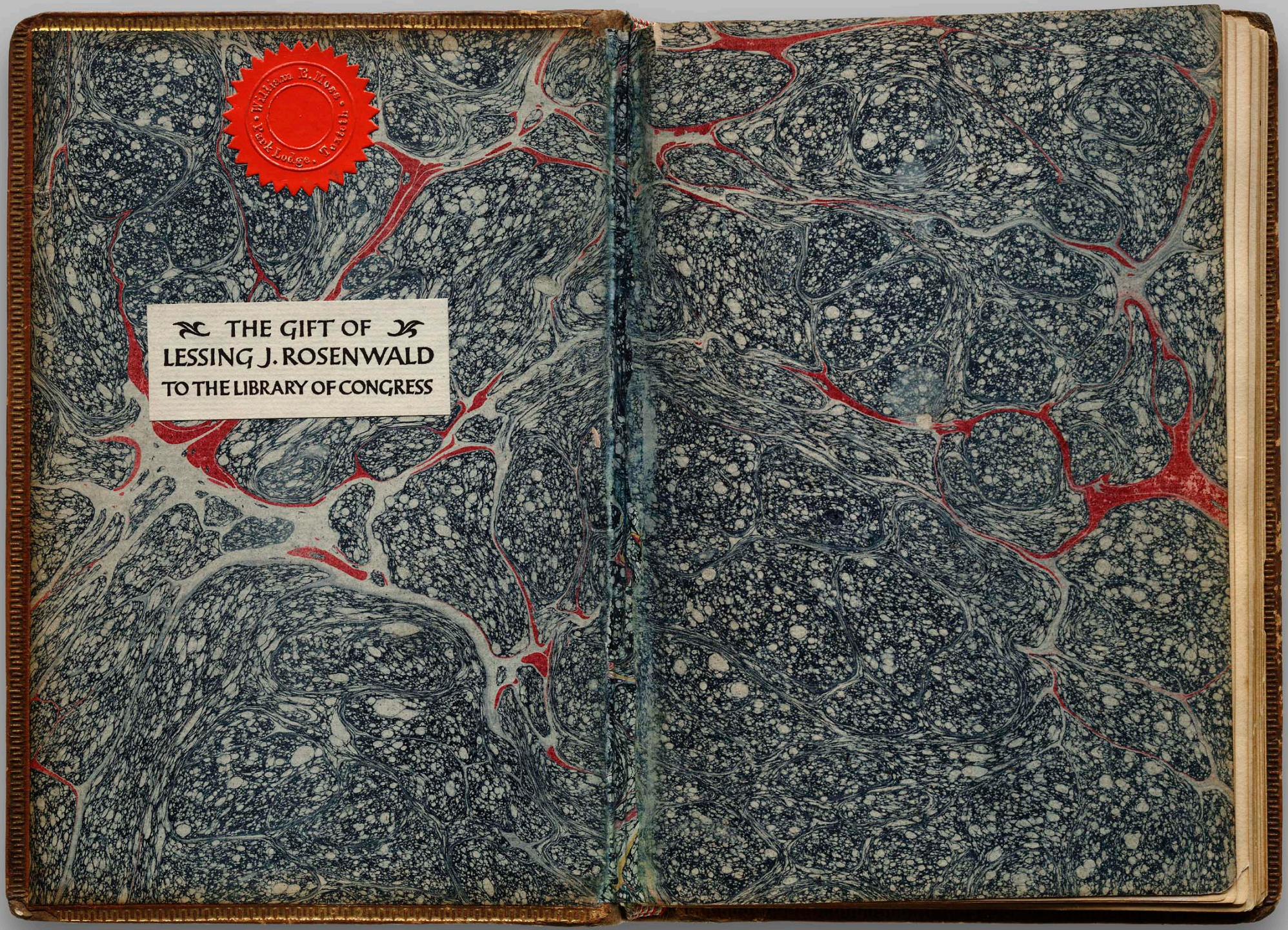

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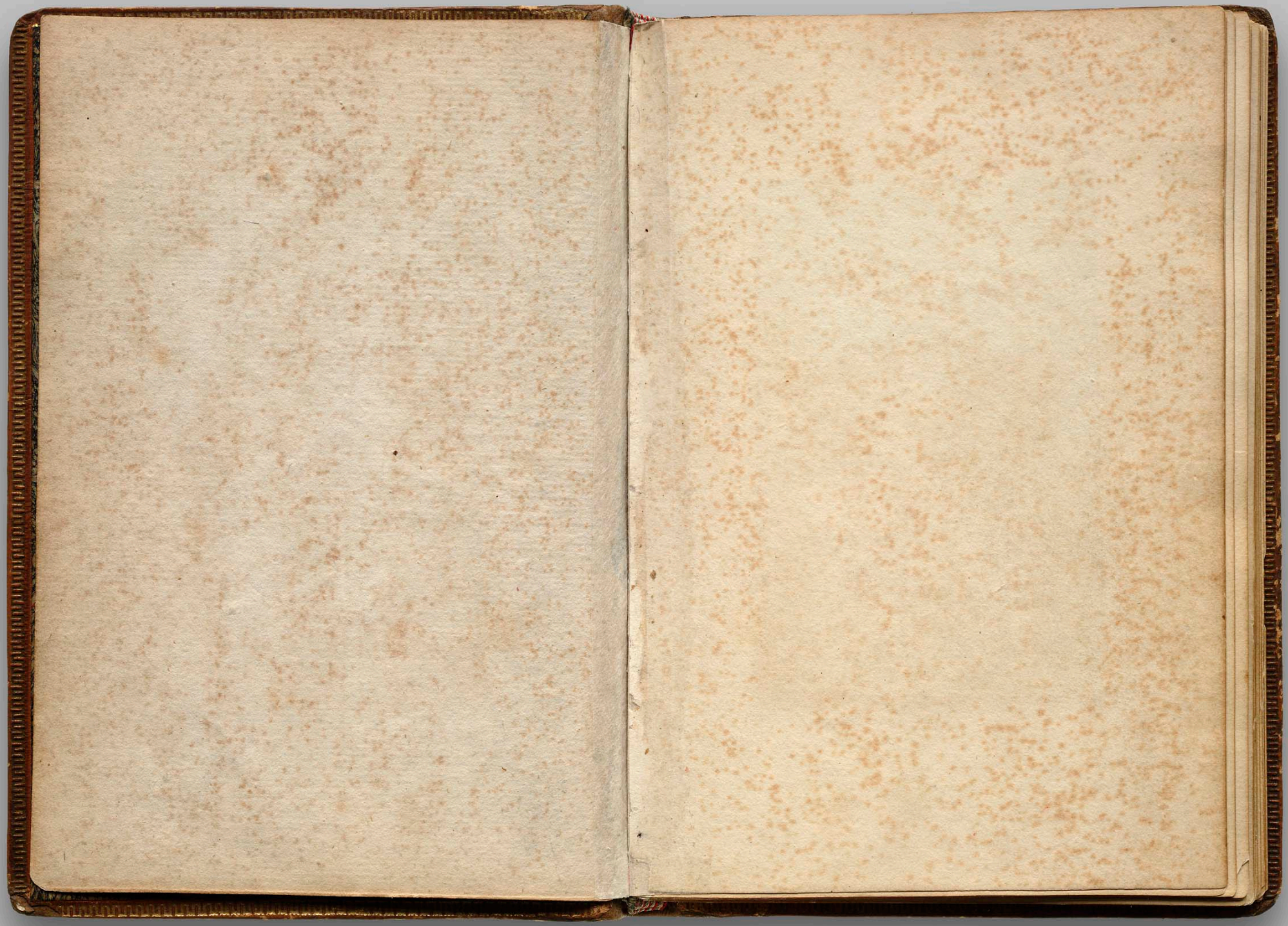
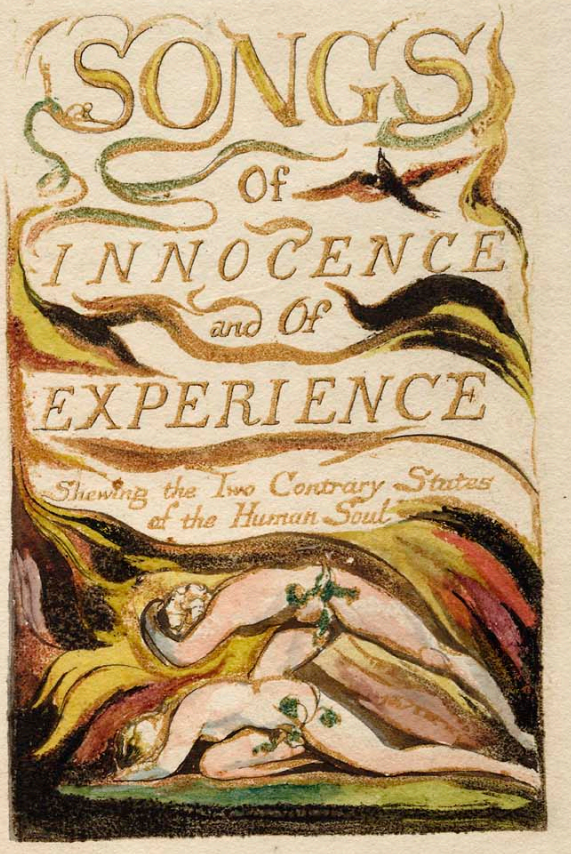
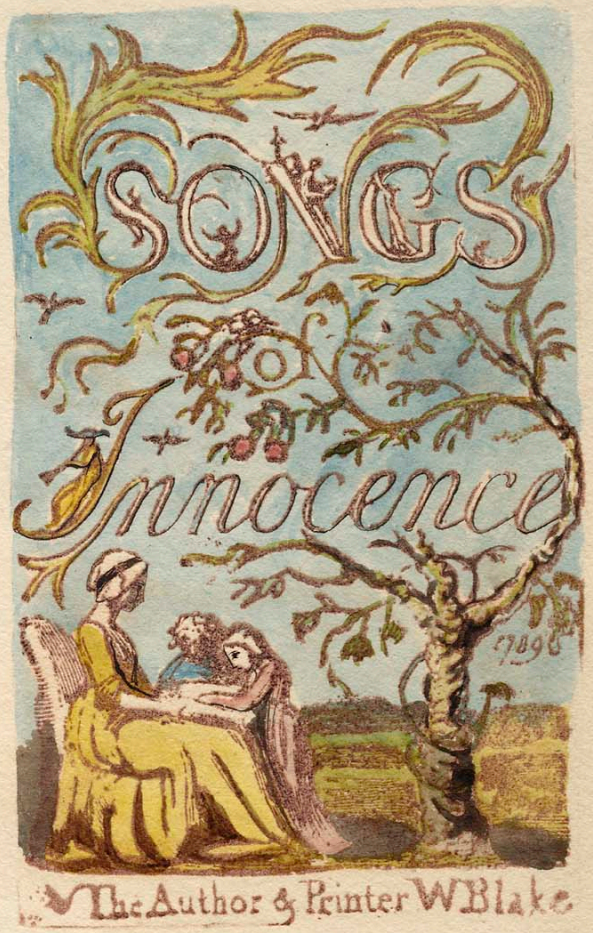



SONGS
Of
INNOCENCE
and Of
EXPERIENCE
Shewing the Two Contrary States
of the Human Soul


SONGS
of
Innocence
1789
The Author & Printer W Blake

Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild
Piping songs of pleasant glee
On a cloud I saw a child.
And he laughing said to me:

Pipe a song about a Lamb;
So I piped with merry chear.
Piper pipe that song again —
So I piped, he wept to hear.

Drop thy pipe thy happy pipe
Sing thy songs of happy chear,
So I sung the same again
While he wept with joy to hear

Piper sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read —
So he vanish'd from my sight:
And I pluck'd a hollow reed.

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear

Infant Joy

I have no name
I am but two days old.—
What shall I call thee?
I happy am
Joy is my name.—
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee:
Thou dost smile.
I sing the while
Sweet joy befall thee.

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Wept for me for thee for all.
When he was an infant small.
Thou his image ever see.
Heavenly face that smiles on thee.
Smiles on thee on me on all.
Who became an infant small.
Infant smiles are his own smiles.
Heaven & earth to peace beguiles.

The Lamb
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing wooly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice;
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb I'll tell thee;
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb;
He is meek & he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee.
Little Lamb God bless thee.

The Blossom.

Merry Merry Sparrow
Under leaves so green
A happy Blossom
Sees you swift as arrow
Seek your cradle narrow
Near my Bosom.

Pretty Pretty Robin
Under leaves so green
A happy Blossom
Hears you sobbing sobbing
Pretty Pretty Robin
Near my Bosom.

Nurses Song.

When the voices of children are heard on the green
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast
And everything else is still.

Then come home my children the sun is gone down
And the dews of night arise.
Come come leave off play, and let us away
Till the morning appears in the skies.

No no let us play, for it is yet day
And we cannot go to sleep.
Besides in the sky the little birds fly
And the hills are all covered with sheep.

Well well go & play till the light fades away
And then go home to bed.
The little ones leaped & shouted & laugh'd
And all the hills ecchoed.

HOLY THURSDAY

'Twas on Holy Thursday their innocent faces clean
The children walking two & two in red & blue & green
Grey headed beadles walkd before with wands as white as snow
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames waters flow

O what a multitude they seemd these flowers of London town
Seated in companies they sit with radiance all their own
The hum of multitudes was there but multitudes of lambs
Thousands of little boys & girls raising their innocent hands

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among
Beneath them sit the aged men wise guardians of the poor
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door

The Ecchoing Green

The Sun does arise,
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.
The sky-larks and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around,
To the bells cheerful sound.
While our sports shall be seen
On the Ecchoing Green.

Old John with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk.

They

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They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say:
Such, such were the joys
When we all girls & boys,
In our youth-time were seen,
On the Eccho'ing Green.

Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end:
Round the laps of their mothers
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest:
And sport no more seen,
On the darkening Green.

On Anothers Sorrow

Can I see anothers woe,
And not be in sorrow too.
Can I see anothers grief,
And not seek for kind relief.

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrows share,
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd.

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan an infant fear —
No no never can it be,
Never never can it be.

And can he who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small,
Hear the small birds grief & care
Hear the woes that infants bear —

And not sit beside the nest
Pouring pity in their breast,
And not sit the cradle near
Weeping tear an infants tear,

And not sit both night & day,
Wiping all our tears away,
O! no never can it be,
Never never can it be.

He doth give his joy to all.
He becomes an infant small,
He becomes a man of woe
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy maker is not by,
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy maker is not near.

O! he gives to us his joy,
That our grief he may destroy
Till our grief is fled & gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

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Spring

Sound the Flute!
Now it's mute.
Birds delight
Day and Night.
Nightingale
In the dale
Lark in Sky
Merrily
Merrily Merrily to welcome in the (Year

Little Boy
Full of joy.

Little

Little Girl
Sweet and small.
Cock does crow
So do you.
Merry voice
Infant noise
Merrily Merrily to welcome in the Year.

Little Lamb
Here I am,
Come and lick
My white neck.
Let me pull
Your soft Wool.
Let me kiss
Your soft face.
Merrily Merrily we welcome in the Year

The School Boy

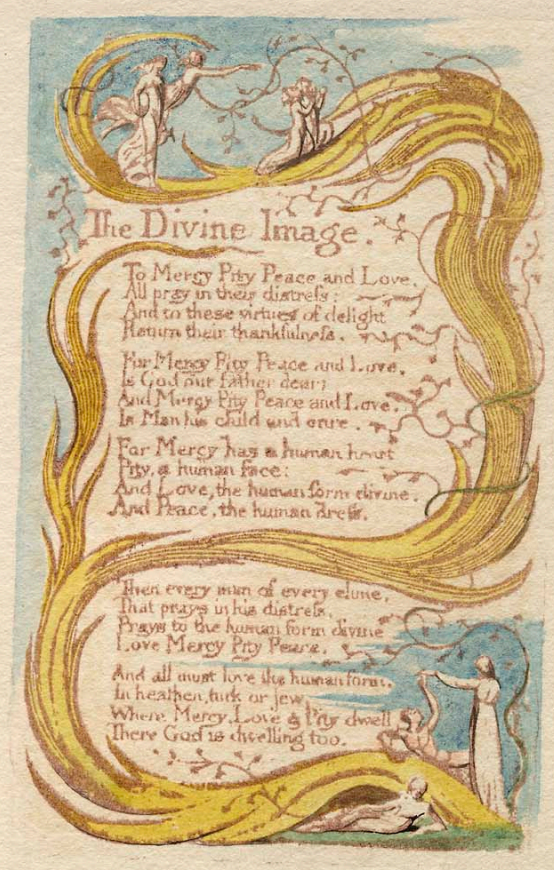
I love to rise in a summer morn,
When the birds sing on every tree;
The distant huntsman winds his horn,
And the sky-lark sings with me.
O! what sweet company.

But to go to school in a summer morn,
O! it drives all joy away:
Under a cruel eye outworn.
The little ones spend the day.
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit.
And spend many an anxious hour.
Nor in my book can I take delight,
Nor sit in learnings bower,
Worn thro' with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy.
Sit in a cage and sing.
How can a child when fears annoy.
But droop his tender wing.
And forget his youthful spring.

O! father & mother, if buds are nip'd,
And blossoms blown away.
And if the tender plants are strip'd
Of their joy in the springing day.
By sorrow and cares dismay.
How shall the summer arise in joy.
Or the summer fruits appear.
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy
Or bless the mellowing year.
When the blasts of winter appear.



The Divine Image.

To Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
All pray in their distress:
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
Is God our father dear;
And Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
Is Man his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart
Pity, a human face:
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine
Love Mercy Pity Peace.

And all must love the human form,
In heathen, turk or jew.
Where Mercy Love & Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

The Chimney Sweeper.

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue,
Could scarcely cry weep weep weep weep.
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre who cried when his head,
That curl'd like a lambs back, was shav'd, so I said:
Hush Tom never mind it, for when your heads bare
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.

And so he was quiet, & that very night,
As Tom was a sleeping he had such a sight,
That thousands of sweepers Dick, Joe, Ned & Jack
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

And by came an Angel who had a bright key
And he opend the coffins & set them all free.
Then down a green plain leaping laughing they run
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.
And the Angel told Tom if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke and we rose in the dark
And get with our bags & our brushes to work.
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm,
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

Laughing Song.

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by,
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it.

When the meadows laugh with lively green
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene,
When Mary and Susan and Emily
With their sweet round mouths sing Ha, Ha, He,

When the painted birds laugh in the shade
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread
Come live & be merry and join with me,
To sing the sweet chorus of Ha, Ha, He.

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The Little Black Boy

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but O! my soul is white.
White as an angel is the English child:
But I am black as if bereavd of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree
And sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissed me,
And pointing to the east began to say.

Look on the rising sun: there God does live
And gives his light, and gives his heat away.
And flowers and trees and beasts and men recieve
Comfort in morning, joy in the noon day.

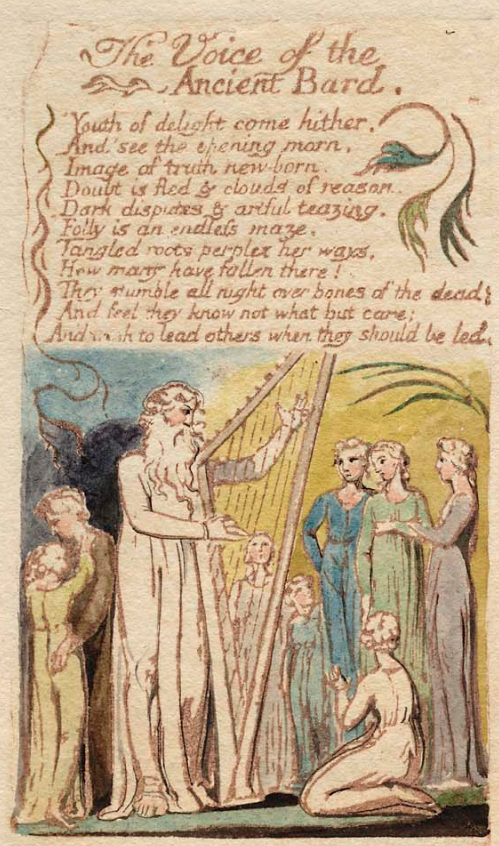
And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love.
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

For

For when our souls have learn'd the heat to bear
The cloud will vanish; we shall hear his voice,
Saying: come out from the grove my love & care,
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.

Thus did my mother say and kissed me,
And thus I say to little English boy.
When I from black and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy:

Ill shade him from the heat till he can bear,
To lean in joy upon our fathers knee.
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him and he will then love me.



The Voice of the Ancient Bard.

Youth of delight come hither,
And see the opening morn,
Image of truth new-born.
Doubt is fled & clouds of reason.
Dark disputes & artful teazing.
Folly is an endless maze,
Tangled roots perplex her ways,
How many have fallen there!
They stumble all night over bones of the dead;
And feel they know not what but care;
And wish to lead others when they should be led.

Night.

The sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine.
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine.
The moon like a flower,
In heavens high bower;
With silent delight,
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell green fields and happy groves,
Where flocks have took delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are covered warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm:
If they see any weeping,
That should have been sleeping
They pour sleep on their head
And sit down by their bed.

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The Little Boy lost

Father, father where are you going
O do not walk so fast.
Speak father, speak to your little boy
Or else I shall be lost.

The night was dark no father was there
The child was wet with dew.
The mire was deep, & the child did weep
And away the vapour flew.

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The Little Boy found

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,
Led by the wandring light,
Began to cry, but God ever nigh,
Appeard like his father in white.

He kissed the child & by the hand led
And to his mother brought,
Who in sorrow pale, thro' the lonely dale
Her little boy weeping sought.

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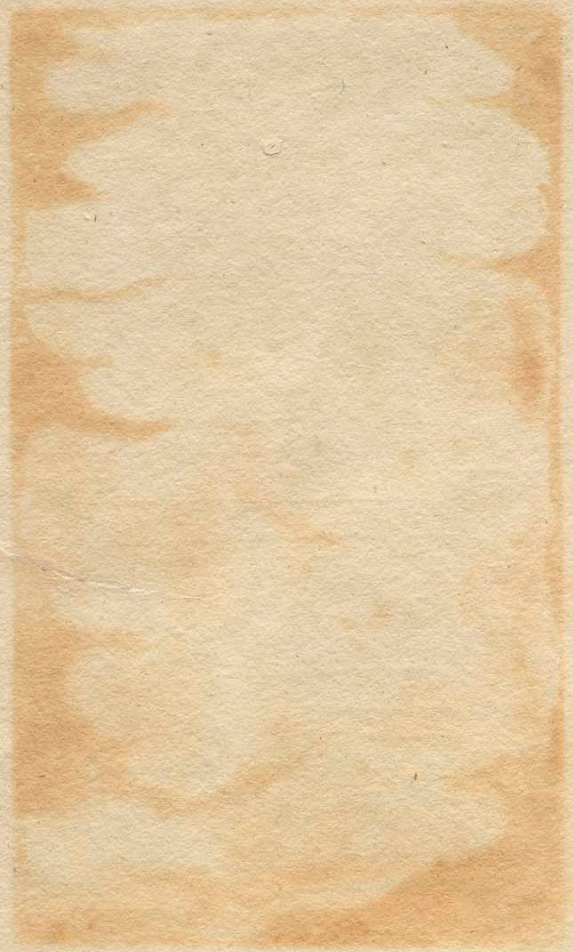
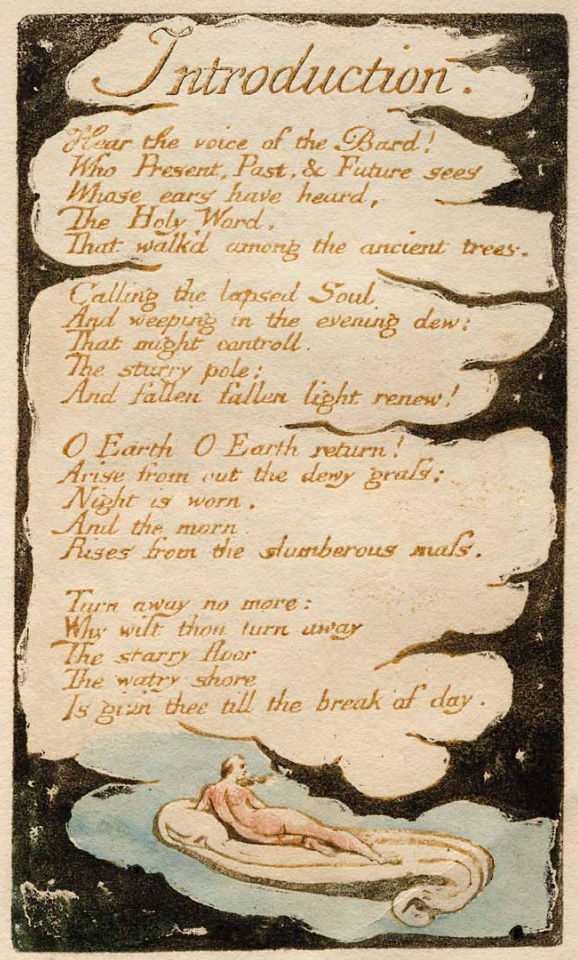
SONGS
EXPERIENCE
The Author & Printer W Blake





Introduction.

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who Present, Past, & Future sees
Whose ears have heard,
The Holy Word,
That walk'd among the ancient trees.

Calling the lapsed Soul
And weeping in the evening dew:
That might controll
The starry pole;
And fallen fallen light renew!

O Earth O Earth return!
Arise from out the dewy grass;
Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumberous mass.

Turn away no more:
Why wilt thou turn away
The starry floor
The watry shore
Is given thee till the break of day.

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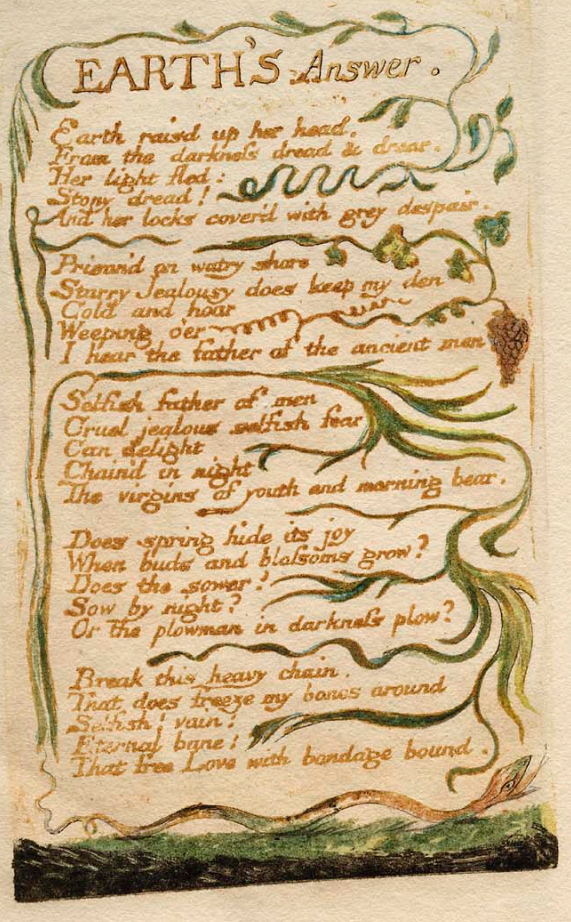


EARTH'S Answer.

Earth raisd up her head:
From the darknes dread & drear.
Her light fled:
Stony dread!
And her locks covered with grey despair.

Prisond on watry shore
Starry Jealousy does keep my den
Cold and hoar
Weeping o'er
I hear the father of the ancient men

Selfish father of men
Cruel jealous selfish fear
Can delight
Chaind in night
The virgins of youth and morning bear.

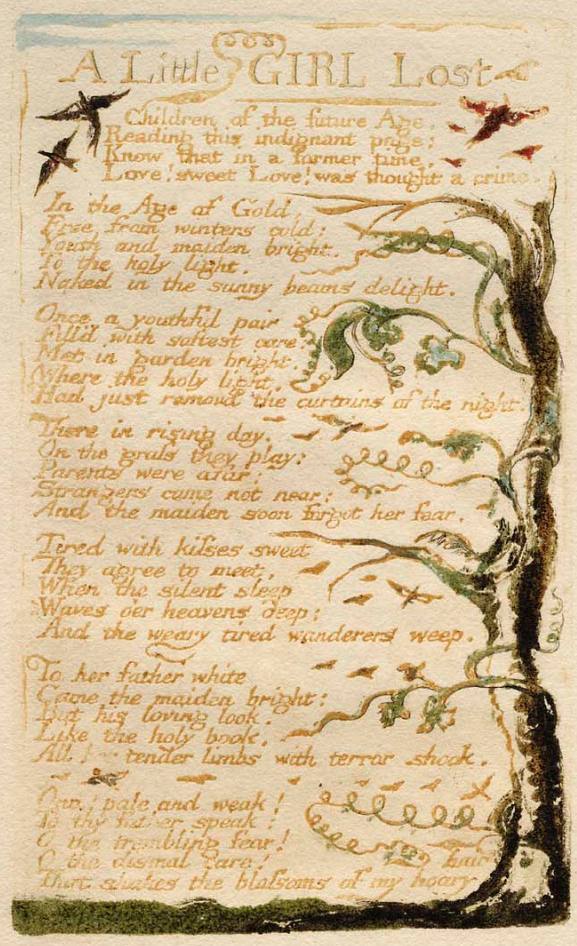
Does spring hide its joy
When buds and blossoms grow?
Does the sower
Sow by night?
Or the plowman in darknes plow?

Break this heavy chain
That does freeze my bones around
Selfish! vain!
Eternal bane!
That free Love with bandage bound.

INFANT SORROW

My mother groand! my father wept.
Into the dangerous world I leapt:
Helpless, naked, piping loud:
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my fathers hands:
Striving against my swadling bands:
Bound and weary I thought best
To sulk upon my mothers breast.



A Little GIRL Lost

Children of the future Age,
Reading this indignant page:
Know that in a former time,
Love! sweet Love! was thought a crime.

In the Age of Gold,
Free from winters cold:
Youth and maiden bright,
To the holy light,
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair
Filld with soltest care,
Met in garden bright
Where the holy light
Had just removd the curtains of the night.

There in rising day,
On the grass they play:
Parents were afar;
Strangers came not near:
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet
They agree to meet,
When the silent sleep
Waves o'er heavens deep:
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white
Came the maiden bright:
But his loving look,
Like the holy book,
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

Ona! pale and weak!
To thy father speak:
O the trembling fear!
O the dismal care!
That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair.

NURSES Song

When the voices of children are heard on the green
And whisperings are in the dale:
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,
My face turns green and pale.

Then come home my children, the sun is gone down
And the dews of night arise
Your spring & your day are wasted in play
And your winter and night in disguise.

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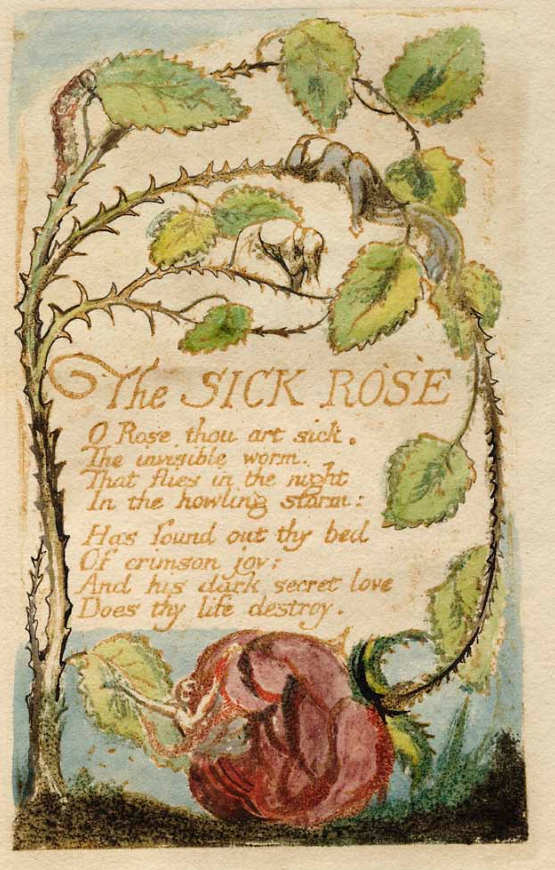
The Angel

I Dreamt a Dream, what can it mean?
And that I was a maiden Queen:
Guarded by an Angel mild:
Witless woe, was ne'er beguild!

And I wept both night and day:
And he wip'd my tears away:
And I wept both day and night:
And hid from him my hearts delight:

So he took his wings and fled;
Then the morn blush'd rosy red:
I dried my tears & armed my fears,
With ten thousand shields and spears:

Soon my Angel came again:
I was armed, he came in vain:
For the time of youth was fled
And grey hairs were on my head.



The SICK ROSE

O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

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The GARDEN of LOVE

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen;
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And Thou shalt not writ over the door;
So I turnd to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be;
And Priests in black gowns, were walking their rounds,
And binding with briars, my joys & desires.

The Little Vagabond

Dear Mother, dear Mother, the Church is cold,
But the Ale-house is healthy & pleasant & warm;
Besides I can tell where I am used well.
Such usage in heaven will never do well.

But if at the Church they would give us some Ale,
And a pleasant fire, our souls to regale;
We'd sing and we'd pray all the live-long day;
Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the Parson might preach & drink & sing,
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;
And modest dame Duck, who is always at Church,
Would not have bandy children nor fasting nor birch.

And God like a father rejoicing to see
His children as pleasant and happy as he:
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the Bear
Nor kiss him & give him both drink and apparel.

The Human Abstract.

Pity would be no more,
If we did not make somebody Poor;
And Mercy no more could be,
If all were as happy as we;

And mutual fear brings peace;
Till the selfish loves increase.
Then Cruelty knits a snare,
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,
And waters the ground with tears:
Then Humility takes its root
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade
Of Mystery over his head;
And the Caterpiller and Fly,
Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,
Ruddy and sweet to eat;
And the Raven his nest has made
In its thickest shade.

The Gods of the earth and sea,
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree
But their search was all in vain:
There grows one in the Human Brain

A Dream.

Once a dream did weave a shade,
O'er my Angel-guarded bed,
That an Emmet lost its way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled wilderd and folorn
Dark benighted travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke I heard her say.

O my children! do they cry,
Do they hear their father sigh,
Now they look abroad to see,
Now return and weep for me.

Pitying I dropp'd a tear;
But I saw a glow-worm near:
Who replied, What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night.

I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round:
Follow now the beetles hum,
Little wanderer hie thee home.

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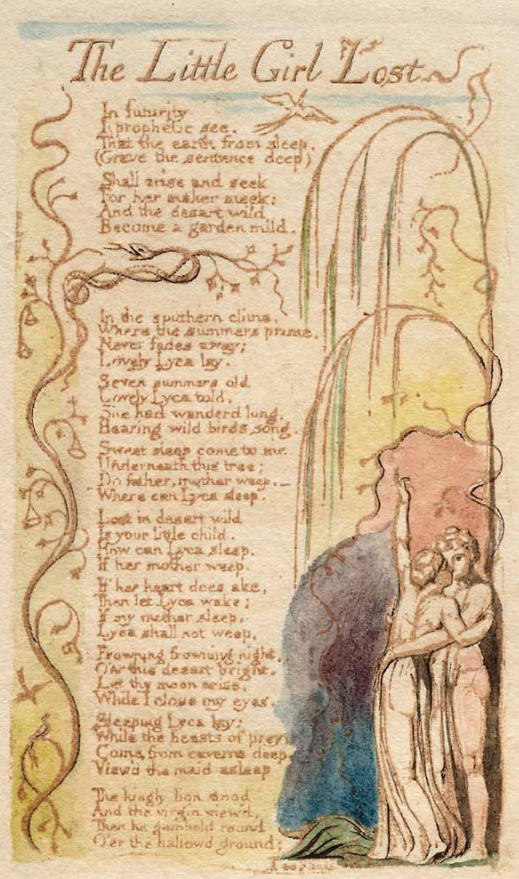

The Little Girl Lost

In futurity
I prophetic see,
That the earth from sleep,
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise and seek
For her maker meek:
And the desart wild
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,
Where the summers prime
Never fades away;
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old
Lovely Lyca told,
She had wanderd long,
Hearing wild birds song.

"Sweet sleep come to me
Underneath this tree;
Do father, mother weep.—
Where can Lyca sleep."

Lost in desart wild
Is your little child.
How can Lyca sleep
If her mother weep.

If her heart does ake,
Then let Lyca wake;
If my mother sleep,
Lyca shall not weep.

Frowning frowning night,
O'er this desart bright,
Let thy moon sise
While I close my eyes.

Sleeping Lyca lay;
While the beasts of prey
Come from caverns deep,
View'd the maid asleep.

The kingly lion stood
And the virgin view'd,
Then he gambold round
O'er the hallowd ground;

Leopards, tigers play,
Round her as she lay;
While the lion old,
Bow'd his mane of gold,

And her bosom lick,
And upon her neck,
From his eyes of flame,
Ruby tears there came;

While the lionesse,
Loosd her slender dress,
And naked they conceal'd
To caves the sleeping maid.

The Little Girl Found

All the night in woe,
Lyca's parents go:
Over valliss deep
While the deserts weep.

Tired and woe-begone,
Hoarse with making moan:
And in sum seven days,
They traed the desart ways.

Seven nights they sleep,
Among shadows deep,
And dream they see their child
Starv'd in desart wild.

Pale thro' pathless ways
The fancied image strays.

Famish'd

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Naught weeping, weak
With hollow piteous shriek
Rising from unrest,
The trembling woman prest,
With feet of weary woe;
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore
Her armed with sorrow sore;
Till before their way,
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain,
Soon his heavy mane
Bore them to the ground;
Then he stalked around,

Smelling to his prey,
But their fears allay,
When he licks their hands;
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes
Filled with deep surprise;
And wondering behold,
A spirit armed in gold.

On his head a crown,
On his shoulders down
Flowed his golden hair.
Gone was all their care.

Follow me he said,
Weep not for the maid;
In my palace deep,
Lyca lies asleep.

Then they followed,
Where the vision led;
And saw their sleeping child,
Among tygers wild.

To this day they dwell
In a lonely dell,
Nor fear the wolvish howl,
Nor the lions growl.

A Little BOY Lost

Nought loves another as itself
Nor venerates another so.
Nor is it possible to thought
A greater than itself to know:

And Father, how can I love you,
Or any of my brothers more?
I love you like the little bird
That picks up crumbs around the door.

The Priest sat by and heard the child
In trembling zeal he siz'd his hair:
He led him by his little coat:
And all admired the Priestly care.

And standing on the altar high
Lo what a fiend is here said he:
One who sets reason up for judge
Of our most holy Mystery.

The weeping child could not be heard,
The weeping parents wept in vain:
They strip'd him to his little shirt.
And bound him in an iron chain.

And burn'd him in a holy place,
Where many had been burnd before:
The weeping parents wept in vain.
Are such things done on Albions shore.

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THE Chimney Sweeper

A little black thing among the snow:
Crying weep, weep, in notes of woe!
Where are thy father & mother? say?
They are both gone up to the church to pray.

Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil'd among the winters snow:
They clothed me in the clothes of death,
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

And because I am happy, & dance & sing,
They think they have done me no injury:
And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King
Who make up a heaven of our misery.

THE FLY.

Little Fly,
Thy summers play,
My thoughtless hand
Has brushed away.

Am not I
A fly like thee?
Or art not thou
A man like me?

For I dance
And drink & sing;
Till some blind hand
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life
And strength & breath:
And the want
Of thought is death;

Then am I
A happy fly,
If I live,
Or if I die?

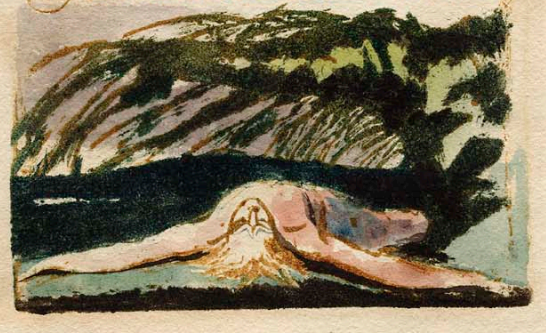
A POISON TREE.

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I waterd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,
When the night had veild the pole;
In the morning glad I see;
My foe outstretchd beneath the tree.



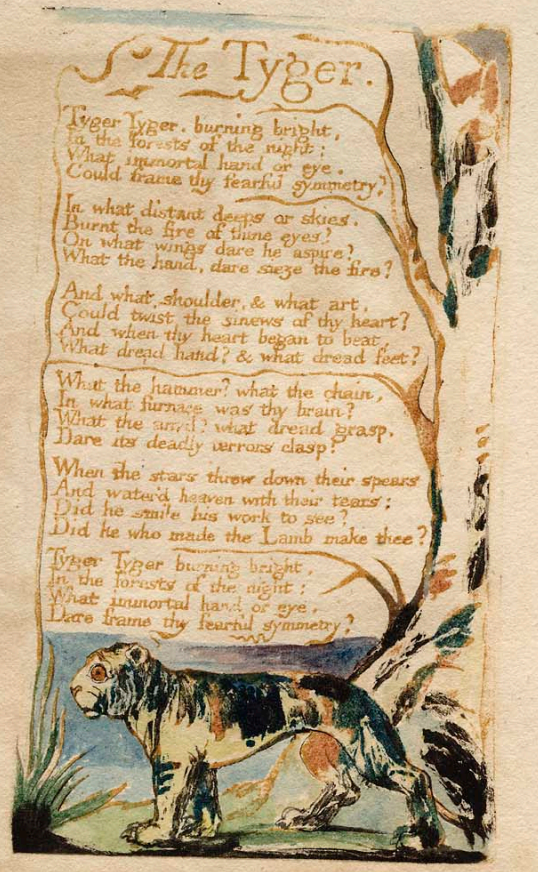
LONDON

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice; in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldiers sigh,
Runs in blood down Palace walls

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse



The Tyger.

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies,
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare sieze the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

My Pretty ROSE TREE

A flower was offerd to me:
Such a flower as May never bore.
But I said I've a Pretty Rose-tree.
And I pass'd the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my Pretty Rose-tree:
To tend her by day and by night.
But my Rose turnd away with jealousy:
And her thorns were my only delight.

AH! SUN-FLOWER

Ah Sun-flower! weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the Sun:
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the travellers journey is done.

Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow:
Arise from their graves and aspire,
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

THE LILLY

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn:
The humble Sheep, a threatning horn:
While the Lilly white, shall in Love delight,
Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright.

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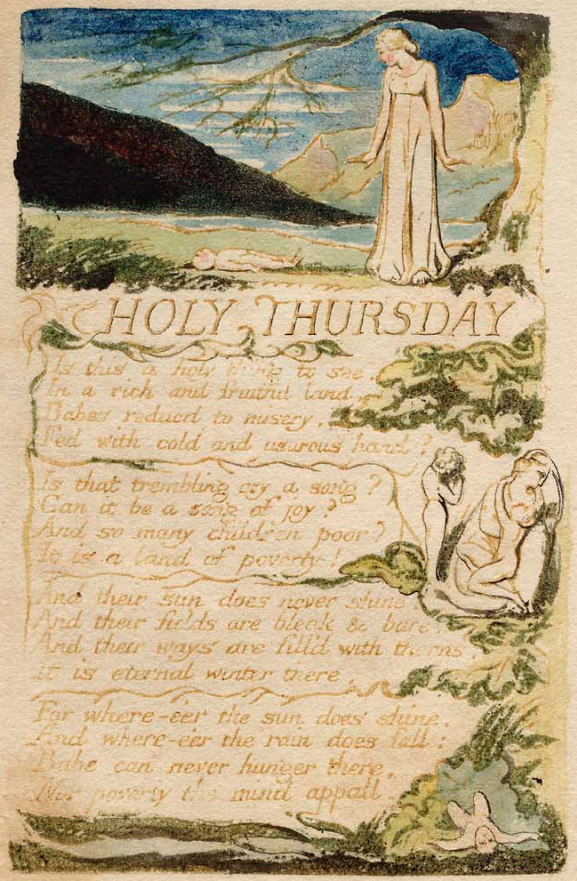

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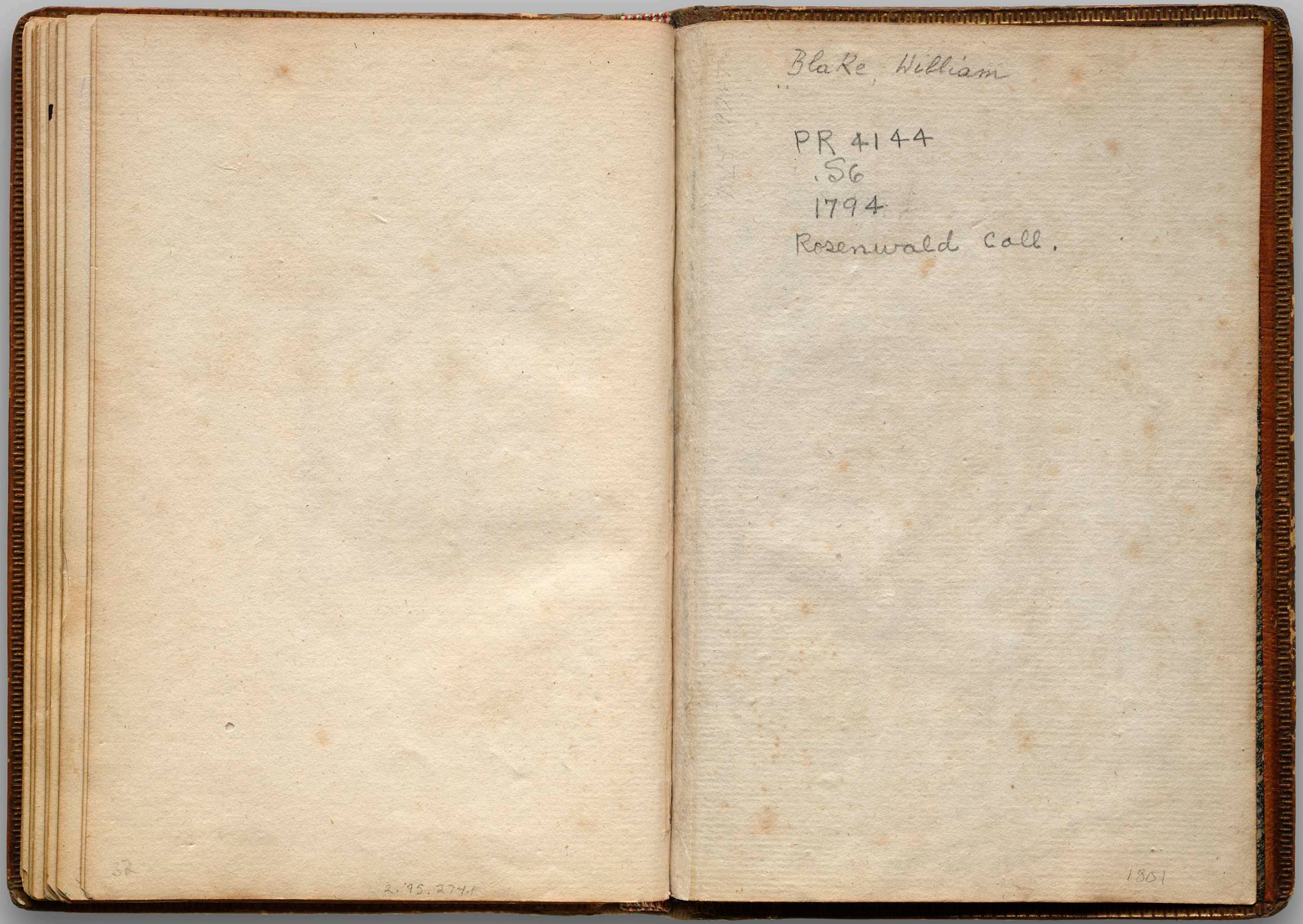

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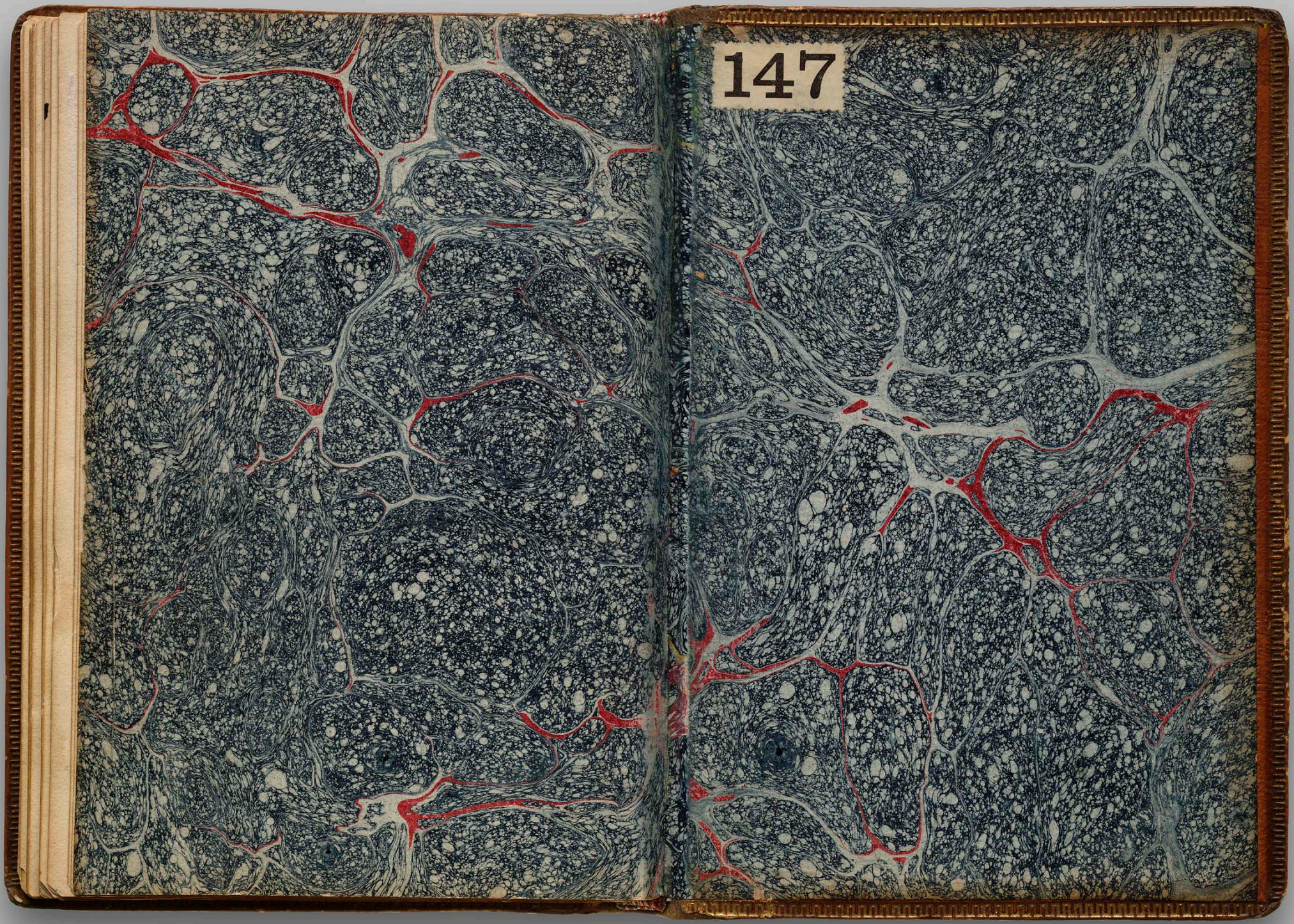

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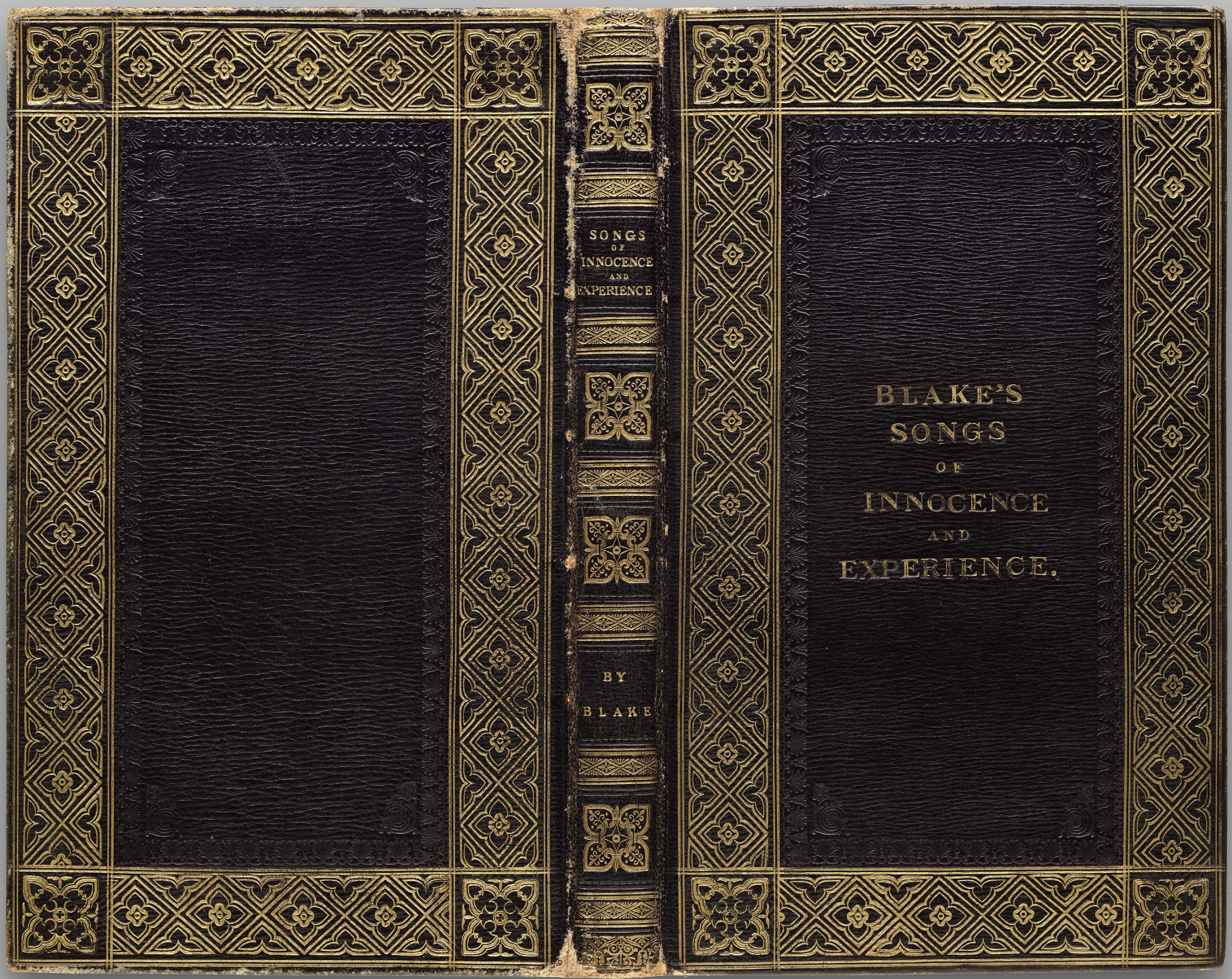

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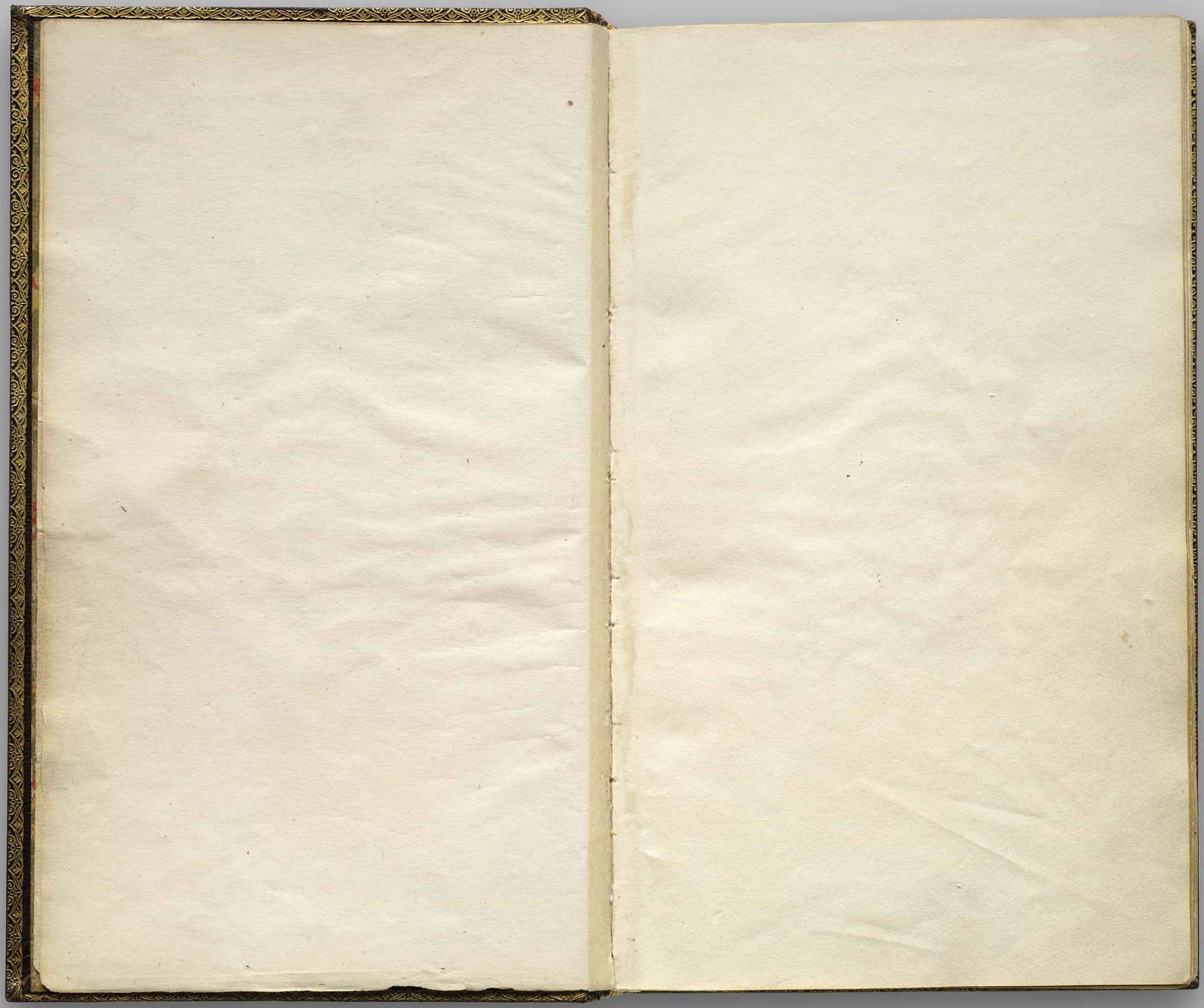
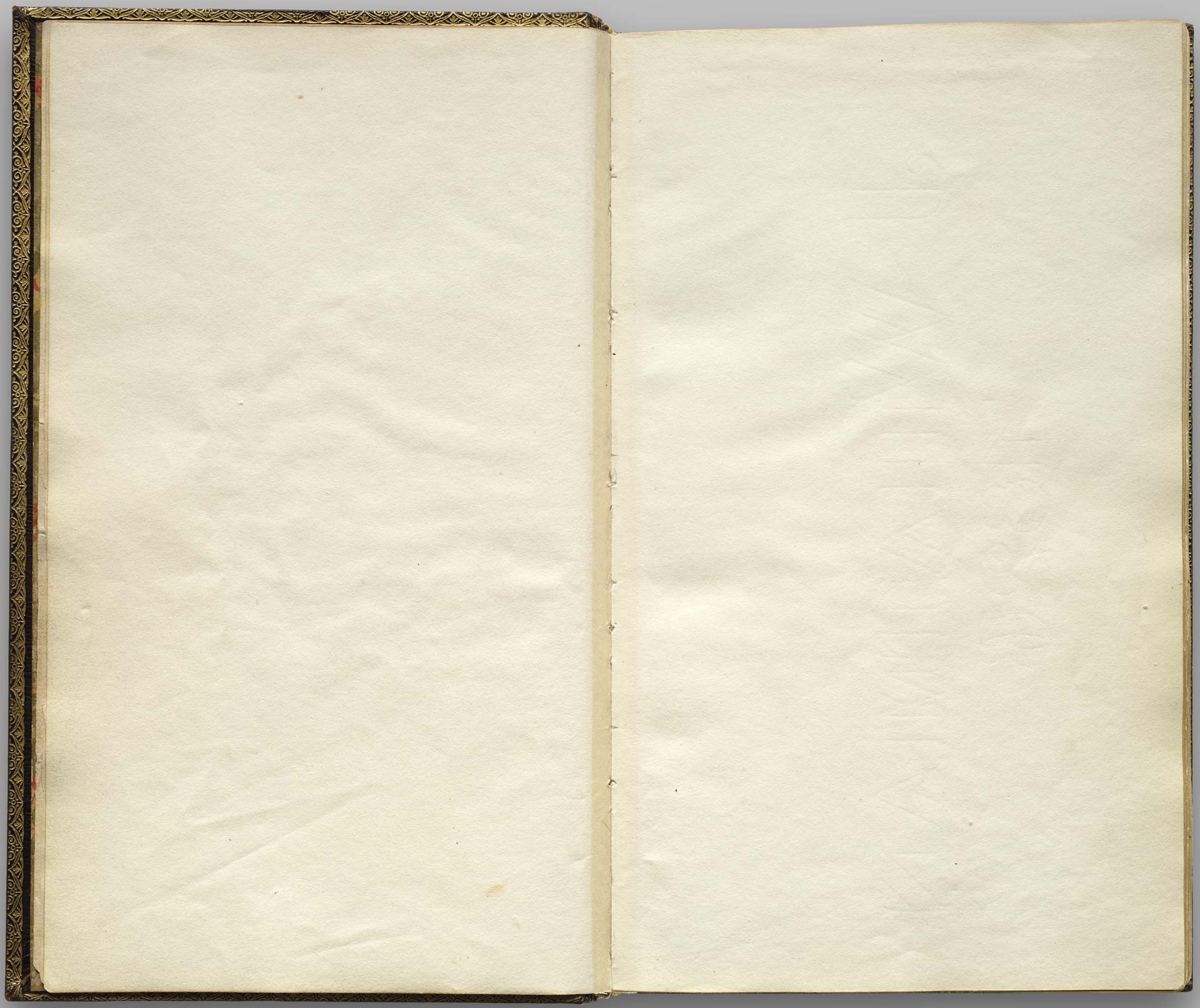
In ca. 1953 this volume was sent to Peter Franck to be unbound in order to have a facsimile made by the Trianon Press (for the Blake Trust). Upon completion the book was rebound by Peter Franck in 1956.

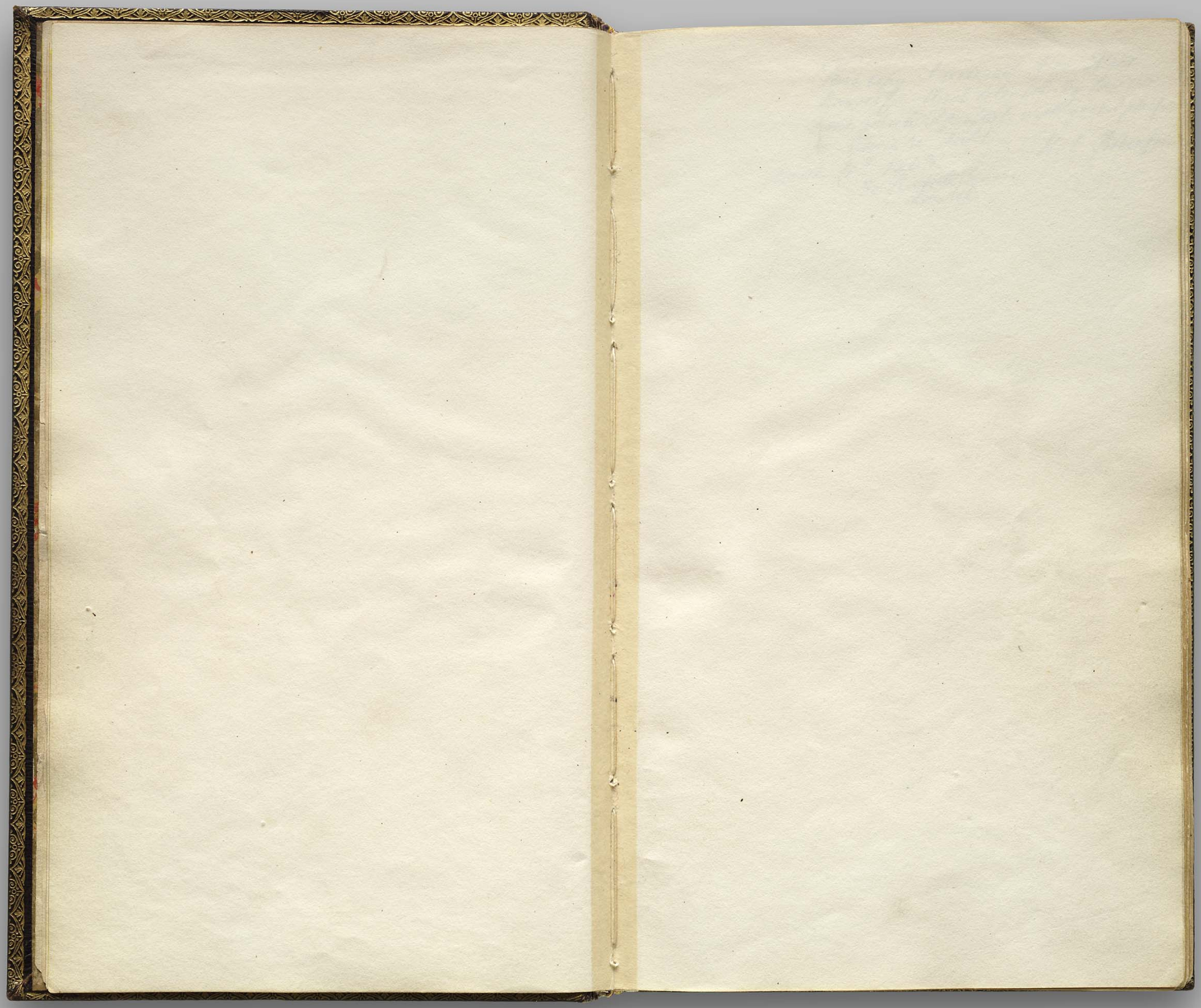
Lessing J. Rosenwald
2/8/56

Given to F. W. Burton
by Mrs Edwin Field
in memory of her
husband –
Oct 6 1871 –

Directed by my uncle Sir
Frederic Burton (extending
to be given to
(Chas Fairfax [illegible])
20.6.17[illegible]
[illegible]







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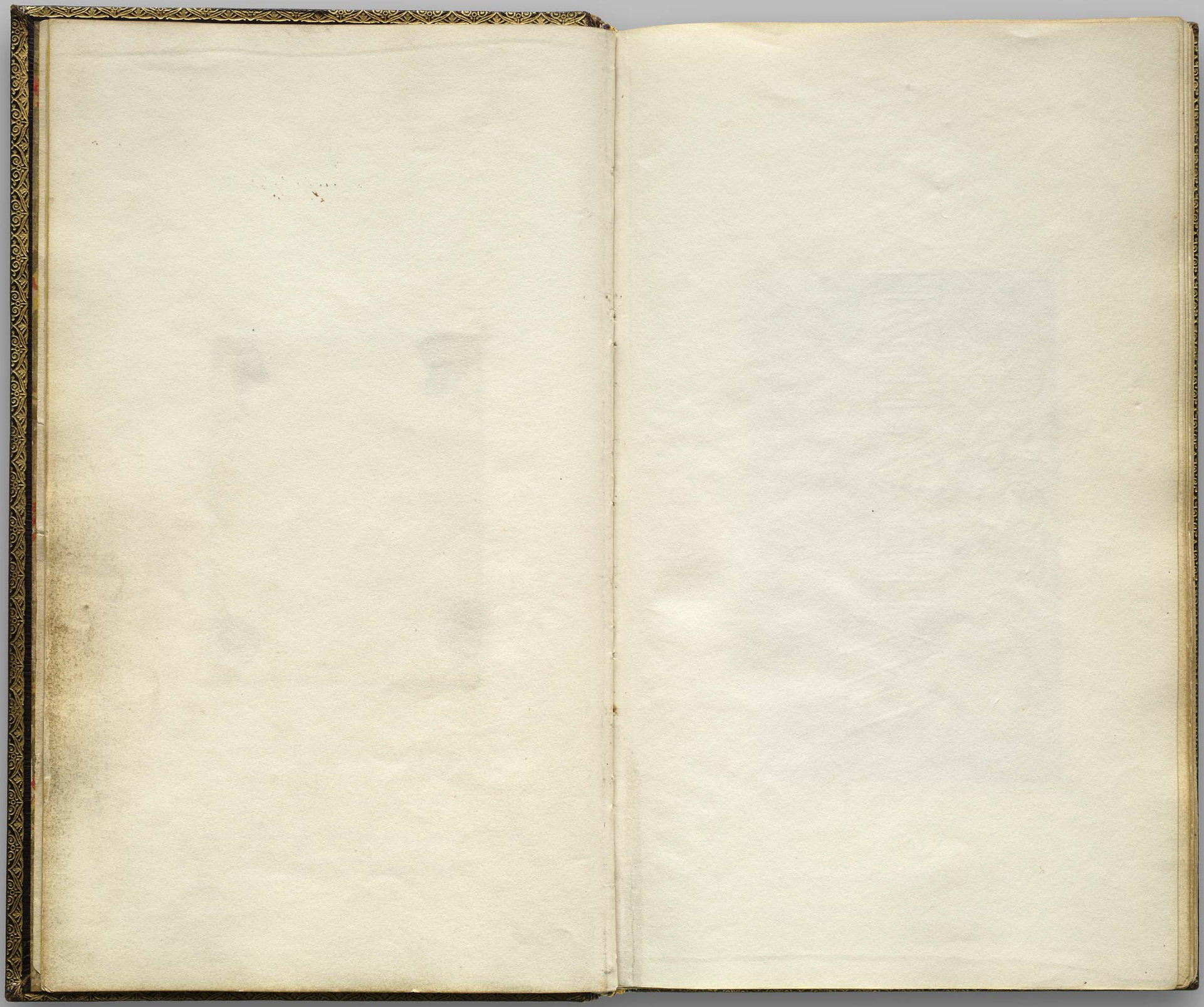
This copy I received from Blake
himself — And coloured by his own
hand which I present with great pleasure
to Edwin W. Field — H. C. Robinson

March 11th 1863.
30 Russell Square
London.

From a miniature by Linnell
by whom this photog was given to me
Oct 1869
E W Field



1
SONGS
Of
INNOCENCE
and Of
EXPERIENCE
Shewing the Two Contrary States
of the Human Soul

3
Songs
of
Innocence
The Author & Printer W Blake

Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild
Piping songs of pleasant glee
On a cloud I saw a child.
And he laughing said to me

Pipe a song about a Lamb
So I piped with merry chear.
Piper pipe that song again
So I piped, he wept to hear.

Drop thy pipe thy happy pipe
Sing thy songs of happy chear
So I sung the same again
While he wept with joy to hear

Piper sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read
So he vanish'd from my sight
And I pluck'd a hollow reed

And I made a rural pen
And I stain'd the water clear
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear

The Shepherd.
How sweet is the Shepherds sweet lot
From the morn to the evening he strays;
He shall follow his sheep all the day
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.
For he hears the lambs innocent call,
And he hears the ewes tender reply.
He is watchful while they are in peace,
For they know when their Shepherd is nigh.

The Ecchoing Green.

The Sun does arise,
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.
The sky-lark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around,
To the bells cheerful sound.
While our sports shall be seen
On the Ecchoing Green.

Old John with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak
Among the old folk.

They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say
Such, such were the joys.
When we all girls & boys,
In our youthful time were seen,
On the Eccho'ing Green.

Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end:
Round the laps of their mothers
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest;
And sport no more seen,
On the darkening Green.

The Lamb
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing wooly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice:
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek & he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee.
Little Lamb God bless thee.

The Little Black Boy

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but O! my soul is white
White as an angel is the English child:
But I am black as if bereav'd of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree
And sitting down before the heat of day
She took me on her lap and kissed me,
And pointing to the east began to say.

Look on the rising sun: there God does live
And gives his light, and gives his heat away.
And flowers and trees and beasts and men recieve
Comfort in morning joy in the noon day.

And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love.
And these black bodies and this sun burnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

For

For when our souls have learn'd the heat to bear
The cloud will vanish we shall hear his voice.
Saying: come out from the grove my love & care.
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.
Thus did my mother say and kissed me.
And thus I say to little English boy.
When I from black and he from white cloud free.
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy:
Ill shade him from the heat till he can bear.
To lean in joy upon our fathers knee.
And then Ill stand and stroke his silver hair.
And be like him and he will then love me.

The Blossom.

Merry Merry Sparrow
Under leaves so green
A happy Blossom
Sees you swift as arrow
Seek your cradle narrow
Near my Bosom.

Pretty Pretty Robin
Under leaves so green
A happy Blossom
Hears you sobbing sobbing
Pretty Pretty Robin
Near my Bosom.

The Chimney Sweeper

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry weep weep weep weep.
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre who cried when his head
That curl'd like a lambs back, was shav'd, so I said
Hush Tom never mind it, for when your head's bare
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.

And so he was quiet, & that very night,
As Tom was a sleeping he had such a sight,
That thousands of sweepers Dick, Joe, Ned & Jack
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

And by came an Angel who had a bright key
And he opend the coffins & set them all free
Then down a green plain leaping laughing they run
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.
And the Angel told Tom if he'd be a good boy
He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark
And get with our bags & our brushes to work.
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm;
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

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The Little Boy Lost

Father, father where are you going
O do not walk so fast.
Speak father, speak to your little boy
Or else I shall be lost.

The night was dark, no father was there
The child was wet with dew.
The mire was deep, & the child did weep
And away the vapour flew.

The Little Boy Found.

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,
Led by the wandring light,
Began to cry, but God ever nigh,
Appeard like his father in white.

He kissed the child & by the hand led
And to his mother brought,
Who in sorrow pale, thro' the lonely dale
Her little boy weeping sought.

Laughing Song.

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by,
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it.

When the meadows laugh with lively green
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene,
When Mary and Susan and Emily,
With their sweet round mouths sing Ha, Ha, He!

When the painted birds laugh in the shade
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread:
Come live & be merry and join with me,
To sing the sweet chorus of Ha, Ha, He!

A CRADLE SONG

Sweet dreams form a shade
O'er my lovely infants head.
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams.
By happy silent moony beams.

Sweet sleep with soft down.
Weave thy brows an infant crown.
Sweet sleep Angel mild,
Hover oer my happy child.

Sweet smiles in the night.
Hover over my delight
Sweet smiles Mothers smiles
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Chase not slumber from thy eyes.
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles.
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep sleep happy child.
All creation slept and smild.
Sleep sleep, happy sleep.
While oer thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe in thy face.
Holy image I can trace.
Sweet babe once like thee.
Thy maker lay and wept for me.

Wept.

Wept for me for thee for all.
When he was an infant small.
Thou his image ever see.
Heavenly face that smiles on thee.
Smiles on thee on me on all.
Who he came an infant small.
Infant smiles are his own smiles.
Heaven & earth to peace beguiles.

The Divine Image.

To Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
All pray in their distress:
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
Is God our father dear:
And Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
Is Man his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart
Pity, a human face:
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine
Love Mercy Pity Peace.

And all must love the human form,
In heathen, turk or jew.
Where Mercy, Love & Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

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HOLY THURSDAY

'Twas on a Holy Thursday their innocent faces clean
The children walking two & two in red & blue & green
Grey headed beadles walkd before with wands as white as snow
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames waters flow.

O what a multitude they seemd these flowers of London town
Seated in companies they sit with radiance all their own
The hum of multitudes was there but multitudes of lambs
Thousands of little boys & girls raising their innocent hands

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among
Beneath them sit the aged men wise guardians of the poor
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.

Night

The sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine.
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine;
The moon like a flower,
In heavens high bower,
With silent delight,
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell green fields and happy groves,
Where flocks have took delight.
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are covered warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm:
If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping
They pour sleep on their head
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tygers rush for prey
They pitying stand and weep;
Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
But if they rush dreadful;
The angels most heedful,
Recieve each mild spirit,
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lions ruddy eyes,
Shall flow with tears of gold:
And pitying the tender cries,
And walking round the fold:
Saying: wrath by his meekness
And by his health, sickness
Is driven away,
From our immortal day.

And now beside thee bleating lamb
I can lie down and sleep;
Or think on him who bore thy name
Graze after thee and weep.
For washd in lifes river,
My bright mane for ever
Shall shine like the gold
As I guard o'er the fold.

Spring
Sound the Flute!
Now it's mute.
Birds delight
Day and Night.
Nightingale
In the dale
Lark in Sky
Merrily
Merrily Merrily to welcome in the Year
Little Boy
Full of joy.
Little

Little Girl
Sweet and small.
Cock does crow
So do you.
Merry voice
Infant noise
Merrily Merrily to welcome in the Year.
Little Lamb
Here I am.
Come and lick
My white neck.
Let me pull
Your soft Wool.
Let me kiss
Your soft face.
Merrily Merrily we welcome in the Year.

Nurses Song

When the voices of children are heard on the green
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast
And everything else is still.

"Then come home my children the sun is gone down
And the dews of night arise
Come come leave off play, and let us away
Till the morning appears in the skies."

"No no let us play, for it is yet day
And we cannot go to sleep
Besides in the sky the little birds fly
And the hills are all coverd with sheep."

"Well well go & play till the light fades away
And then go home to bed."
The little ones leaped & shouted & laughd
And all the hills echoed.

Infant Joy
I have no name
I am but two days old.—
What shall I call thee?
I happy am
Joy is my name.—
Sweet joy befall thee!
Pretty joy!
Sweet joy but two days old,
Sweet joy I call thee:
Thou dost smile,
I sing the while
Sweet joy befall thee.

A Dream

Once a dream did weave a shade
O'er my Angel-guarded bed,
That an Emmet lost its way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled wilderd and folorn
Dark benighted travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray
All heart-broke I heard her say

O my children! do they cry,
Do they hear their father sigh,
Now they look abroad to see,
Now return and weep for me.

Pitying I dropd a tear:
But I saw a glow-worm near:
Who replied, What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night.

I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round:
Follow now the beetles hum,
Little wanderer hie thee home.

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On Anothers Sorrow

Can I see anothers woe,
And not be in sorrow too.
Can I see anothers grief,
And not seek for kind relief.

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrows share,
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow filld.

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan an infant fear —
No no never can it be,
Never never can it be.

And can he who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small,
Hear the small birds grief & care
Hear the woes that infants bear —

And not sit beside the nest
Pouring pity in their breast,
And not sit the cradle near
Weeping tear an infants tear.

And not sit both night & day,
Wiping all our tears away,
O! no never can it be,
Never never can it be.

He doth give his joy to all.
He becomes an infant small,
He becomes a man of woe
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy maker is not by,
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy maker is not near.

O! he gives to us his joy,
That our grief he may destroy
Till our grief is fled & gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

SONGS
of
EXPERIENCE
1794
The Author & Printer W Blake

Introduction.

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who Present, Past, & Future sees
Whose ears have heard,
The Holy Word,
That walk'd among the ancient trees.

Calling the lapsed Soul
And weeping in the evening dew:
That might controll
The starry pole;
And fallen fallen light renew!

O Earth O Earth return!
Arise from out the dewy grass;
Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumberous mass.

Turn away no more:
Why wilt thou turn away
The starry floor
The watry shore
Is given thee till the break of day.

EARTH'S Answer

Earth raisd up her head,
From the darknes dread & drear.
Her light fled:
Stony dread!
And her locks covered with grey despair.

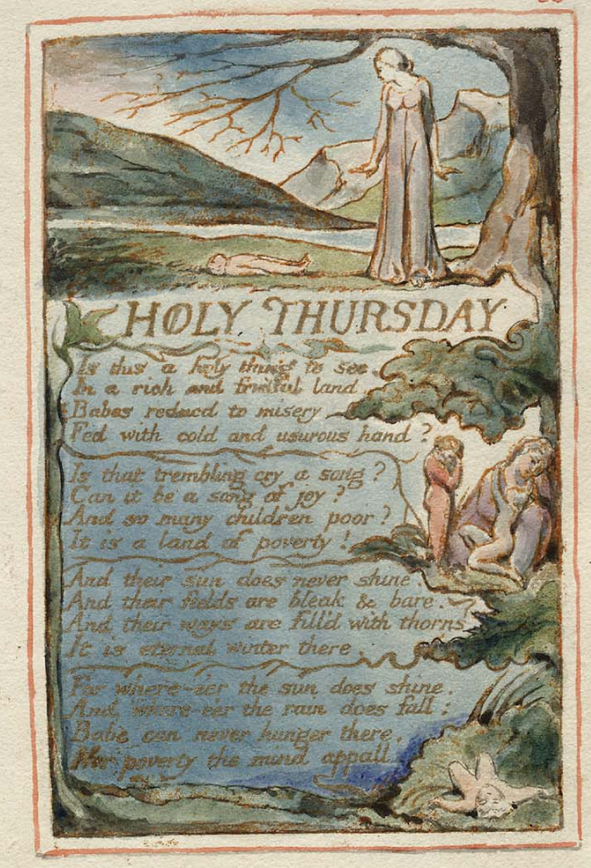
Prisond on watry shore
Starry Jealousy does keep my den
Cold and hoar
Weeping o'er
I hear the Father of the ancient men

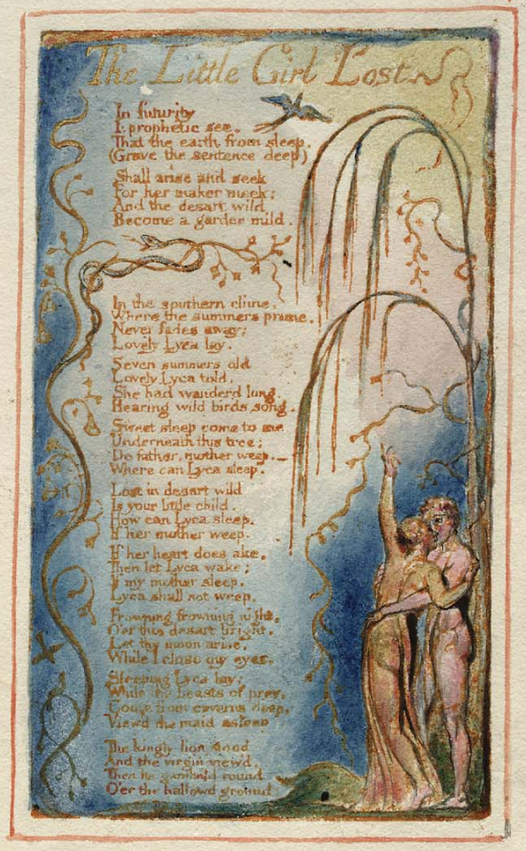
Selfish father of men
Cruel jealous selfish fear
Can delight
Chaind in night
The virgins of youth and morning bear

Does spring hide its joy
When buds and blossoms grow?
Does the sower?
Sow by night?
Or the plowman in darknes plow?

Break this heavy chain
That does freeze my bones around
Selfish! vain!
Eternal bane!
That free Love with bondage bound.

The CLOD & the PEBBLE
Love seeketh not Itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care;
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a Heaven in Hells despair.
So sang a little Clod of Clay,
Trodden with the cattles feet:
But a Pebble of the brook,
Warbled out these metres meet.
Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to its delight:
Joys in anothers loss of ease,
And builds a Hell in Heavens despite.


HOLY THURSDAY
Is this a holy thing to see
In a rich and fruitful land
Babes reduced to misery
Fed with cold and usurous hand?
Is that trembling cry a song?
Can it be a song of joy?
And so many children poor?
It is a land of poverty!
And their sun does never shine
And their fields are bleak & bare
And their ways are filld with thorns
It is eternal winter there
For where-e'er the sun does shine
And where-ever the rain does fall:
Babe can never hunger there
Nor poverty the mind appall



The Little Girl Lost

In futurity
I prophetic see,
That the earth from sleep,
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise and seek
For her maker meek;
And the desart wild
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,
Where the summers prime
Never fades away;
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old
Lovely Lyca told,
She had wanderd long,
Hearing wild birds song.

"Sweet sleep come to me
Underneath this tree;
Do father, mother weep.—
Where can Lyca sleep."

Lost in desart wild
Is your little child.
How can Lyca sleep,
If her mother weep.

If her heart does ake,
Then let Lyca wake;
If my mother sleep,
Lyca shall not weep.

"Frowning frowning night,
O'er this desart bright,
Let thy moon arise,
While I close my eyes."

Sleeping Lyca lay;
While the beasts of prey,
Come from caverns deep,
Viewd the maid asleep.

The kingly lion stood
And the virgin viewd,
Then he gambold round
O'er the hallowd ground.

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Famish'd weeping weak
With hollow piteous shriek
Rising from unrest,
The trembling woman prest
With feet of weary woe;
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore
Her arm'd with sorrow sore;
Till before their way
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain,
Soon his heavy mane
Bore them to the ground;
Then he stalk'd around,

Smelling to his prey,
But their fears allay
When he licks their hands,
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes
Filled with deep surprise;
And wondering behold
A Spirit arm'd in gold.

On his head a crown.
On his shoulders down
Flow'd his golden hair.
Gone was all their care.

Follow me he said;
Weep not for the maid;
In my palace deep,
Lyca lies asleep.

Then they followed
Where the vision led,
And saw their sleeping child
Among tygers wild.

To this day they dwell
In a lonely dell;
Nor fear the wolvish howl,
Nor the lions growl.

The Chimney Sweeper

A little black thing among the snow:
Crying weep, weep, in notes of woe!
Where are thy father & mother? say?
They are both gone up to the church to pray.

Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil'd among the winters snow:
They clothed me in the clothes of death,
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

And because I am happy & dance & sing,
They think they have done me no injury:
And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King
Who make up a heaven of our misery.

NURSES Song
When the voices of children are heard on the green
And whisprings are in the dale:
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,
My face turns green and pale.
Then come home my children, the sun is gone down
And the dews of night arise
Your spring & your day are wasted in play
And your winter and night in disguise.

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THE FLY.

Little Fly
Thy summers play,
My thoughtless hand
Has brushed away.

Am not I
A fly like thee?
Or art not thou
A man like me?

For I dance
And drink & sing;
Till some blind hand
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life
And strength & breath;
And the want
Of thought is death;

Then am I
A happy fly.
If I live,
Or if I die.

The Angel

I Dreamt a Dream. what can it mean,
And that I was a maiden Queen:
Guarded by an Angel mild:
Witless woe, was ne'er beguild!

And I wept both night and day
And he wip'd my tears away
And I wept both day and night
And hid from him my hearts delight

So he took his wings and fled;
then the morn blushd rosy red:
I dried my tears & armd my fears
With ten thousand shields and spears

Soon my Angel came again:
I was armd, he came in vain:
For the time of youth was fled
And grey hairs were on my head.

The Tyger

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And watered heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

My Pretty ROSE TREE

A flower was offerd to me;
Such a flower as May never bare.
But I said I've a Pretty Rose-tree,
And I passed the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my Pretty Rose-tree:
To tend her by day and by night.
But my Rose turnd away with jealousy:
And her thorns were my only delight.

AH! SUN-FLOWER

Ah Sun-flower! weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the Sun:
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the travellers journey is done.

Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow:
Arise from their graves and aspire,
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

THE LILLY

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn:
The humble Sheep, a threatning horn:
While the Lilly white shall in Love delight,
Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright.

The Garden of Love

I went to the Garden of Love.
And saw what I never had seen;
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And Thou shalt not. writ over the door;
So I turnd to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves
And tomb-stones where flowers should be;
And Priests in black gowns, were walking their rounds.
And binding with briars, my joys & desires.

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LONDON
I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.
In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice: in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear
How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldiers sigh,
Runs in blood down Palace walls
But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse

The Human Abstract.

Pity would be no more,
If we did not make somebody Poor;
And Mercy no more could be,
If all were as happy as we;

And mutual fear brings peace;
Till the selfish loves increase.
Then Cruelty knits a snare
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,
And waters the ground with tears:
Then Humility takes its root
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade
Of Mystery over his head;
And the Caterpiller and Fly,
Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit.
Ruddy and sweet to eat;
And the Raven his nest has made
In its thickest shade.

The Gods of the earth and sea,
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree,
But their search was all in vain:
There grows one in the Human Brain.

INFANT SORROW
My mother groand! my father wept.
Into the dangerous world I leapt:
Helpless, naked, piping loud:
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.
Struggling in my fathers hands:
Striving against my swadling bands.
Bound and weary I thought best
To sulk upon my mothers breast.

A POISON TREE

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe;
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I waterd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,
When the night had veild the pole;
In the morning glad I see;
My foe outstretchd beneath the tree.

A Little BOY Lost

Nought loves another as itself
Nor venerates another so.
Nor is it possible to Thought
A greater than itself to know:

And Father, how can I love you.
Or any of my brothers more?
I love you like the little bird
That picks up crumbs around the door.

The Priest sat by and heard the child
In trembling zeal he siezd his hair:
He led him by his little coat:
And all admird the Priestly care.

And standing on the altar high
Lo what a fiend is here! said he:
One who sets reason up for judge
Of our most holy Mystery.

The weeping child could not be heard.
The weeping parents wept in vain:
They stripd him to his little shirt.
And bound him in an iron chain

And burnd him in a holy place.
Where many had been burnd before:
The weeping parents wept in vain.
Are such things done on Albions shore

A Little GIRL Lost

Children of the future Age,
Reading this indignant page;
Know that in a former time,
Love! sweet Love! was thought a crime.

In the Age of Gold,
Free from winters cold;
Youth and maiden bright
To the holy light,
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair
Filld with softest care,
Met in garden bright
Where the holy light
Had just removd the curtains of the night.

There in rising day,
On the grass they play:
Parents were afar;
Strangers came not near:
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet
They agree to meet,
When the silent sleep
Waves o'er heavens deep:
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white
Came the maiden bright;
But his loving look,
Like the holy book,
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

Ona! pale and weak!
To thy father speak:
O the trembling fear!
O the dismal hair!
That shakes the blossoms of my hoary care.

To Tirzah

Whatever is Born of Mortal Birth
Must be consumed with the Earth
To rise from Generation free:
Then what have I to do with thee?

The Sexes sprung from Shame & Pride
Blowd in the morn; in evening died
But Mercy changd Death into Sleep;
The Sexes rose to work & weep.

Thou Mother of my Mortal part
With cruelty didst mould my Heart
And with false self-deceiving tears
Didst bind my Nostrils Eyes & Ears

Didst close my tongue in senseless clay
And me to Mortal Life betray:
The Death of Jesus set me free:
Then what have I to do with thee?

The School Boy

I love to rise in a summer morn,
When the birds sing on every tree;
The distant huntsman winds his horn,
And the sky-lark sings with me.
O! what sweet company.

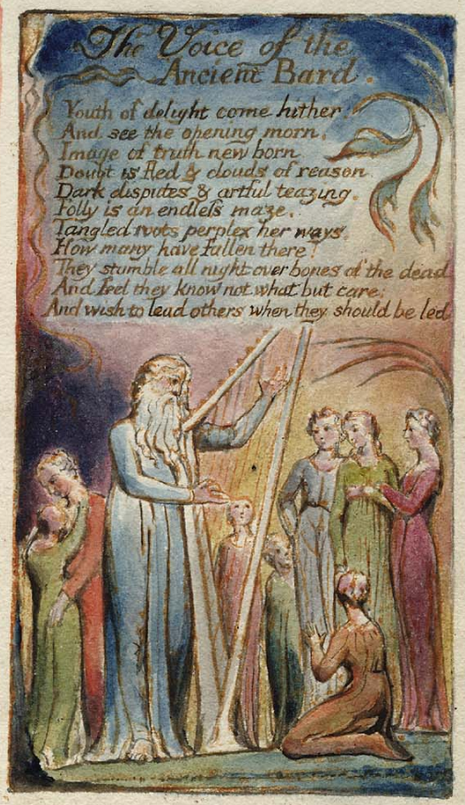
But to go to school in a summer morn,
O! it drives all joy away;
Under a cruel eye outworn
The little ones spend the day
In sighing and dismay.

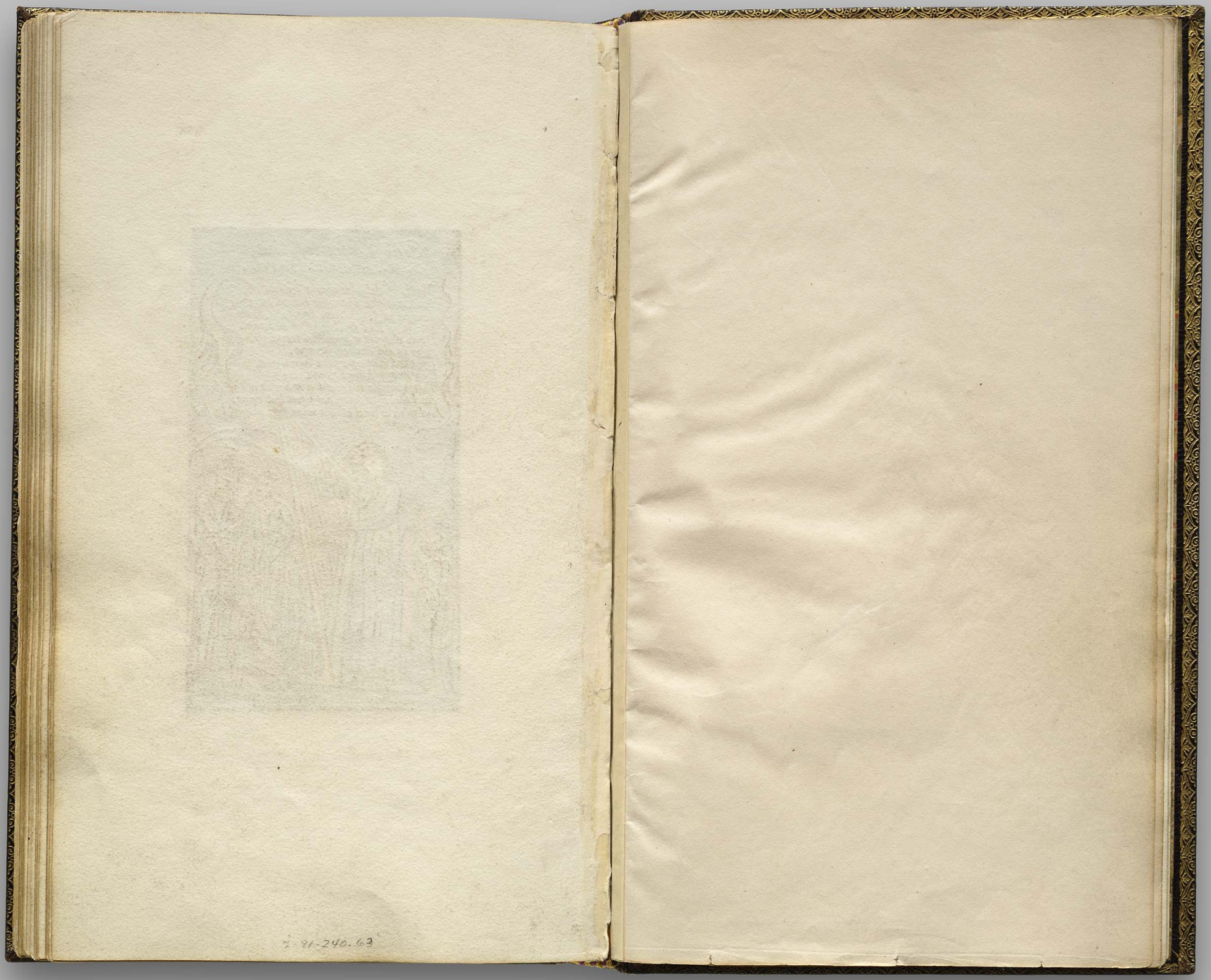
Ah! then at times I drooping sit
And spend many an anxious hour,
Nor in my book can I take delight,
Nor sit in learnings bower,
Worn thro' with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy
Sit in a cage and sing.
How can a child when fears annoy
But droop his tender wing,
And forget his youthful spring.

O father & mother, if buds are nip'd,
And blossoms blown away,
And if the tender plants are strip'd
Of their joy in the springing day,
By sorrow and cares dismay,

How shall the summer arise in joy,
Or the summer fruits appear
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy
Or bless the mellowing year,
When the blasts of winter appear.


The Voice of the
Ancient Bard.
Youth of delight come hither
And see the opening morn,
Image of truth new born.
Doubt is fled & clouds of reason.
Dark disputes & artful teasing.
Folly is an endless maze,
Tangled roots perplex her ways.
How many have fallen there!
They stumble all night over bones of the dead
And feel they know not what but care;
And wish to lead others when they should be led.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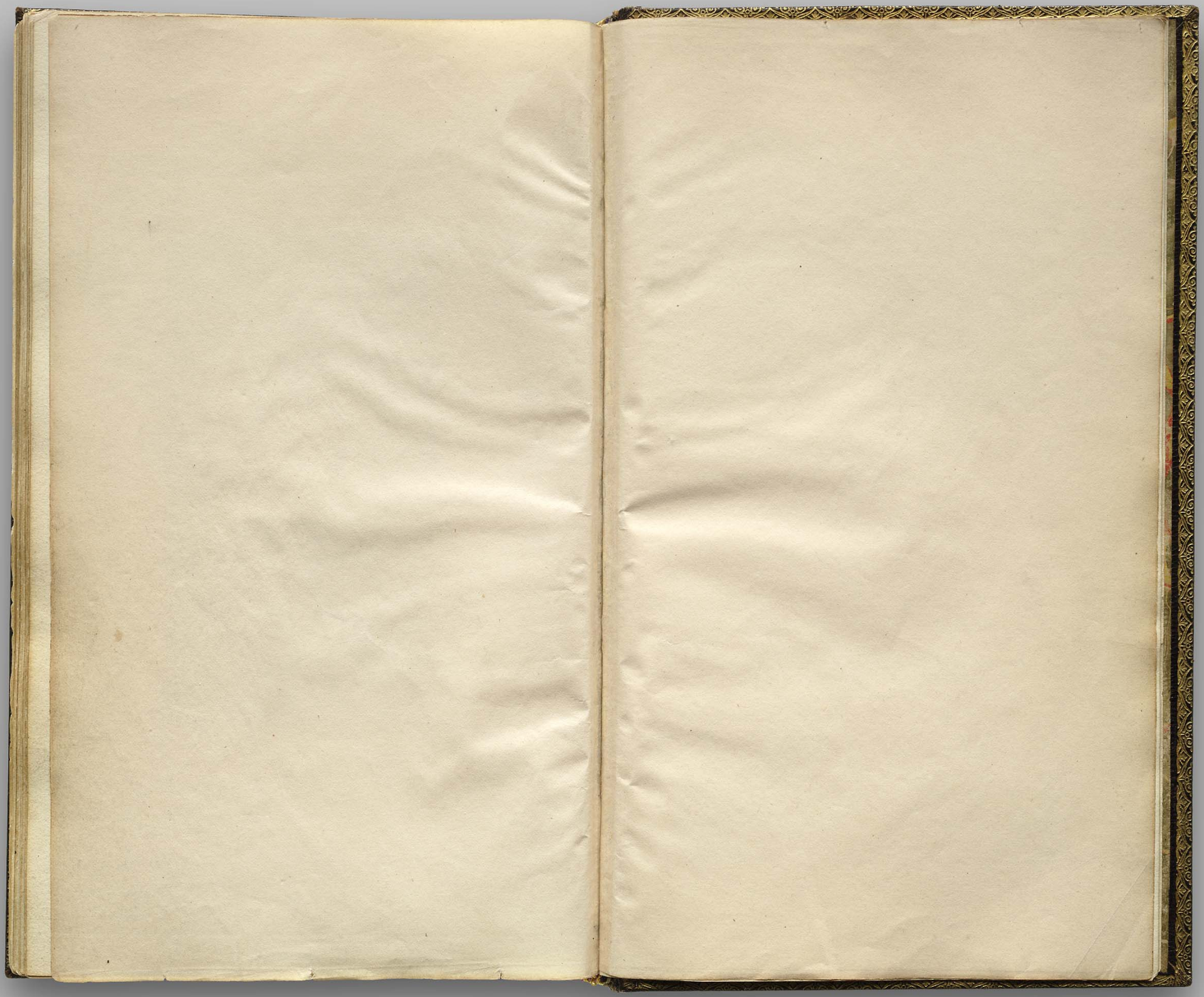

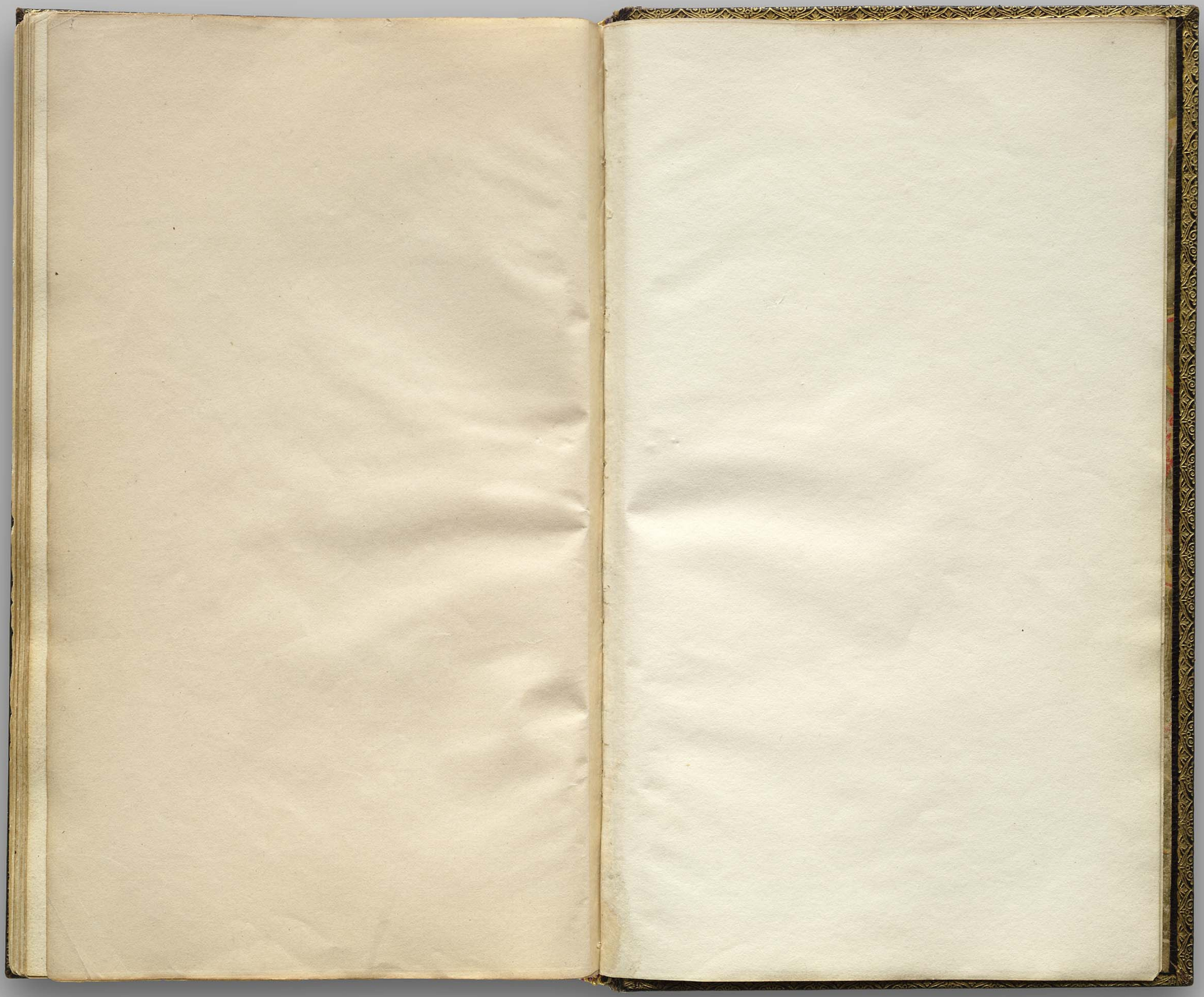

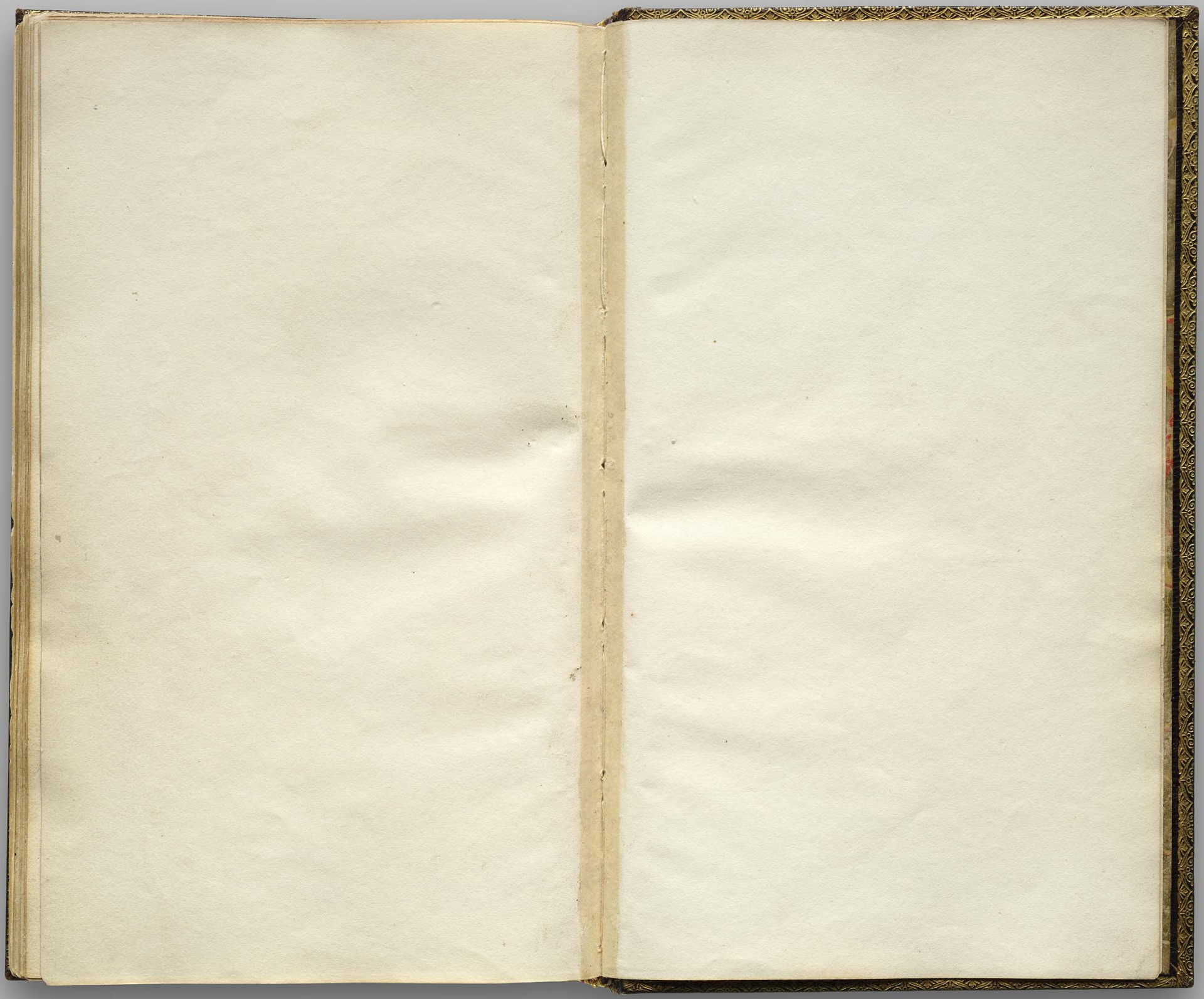

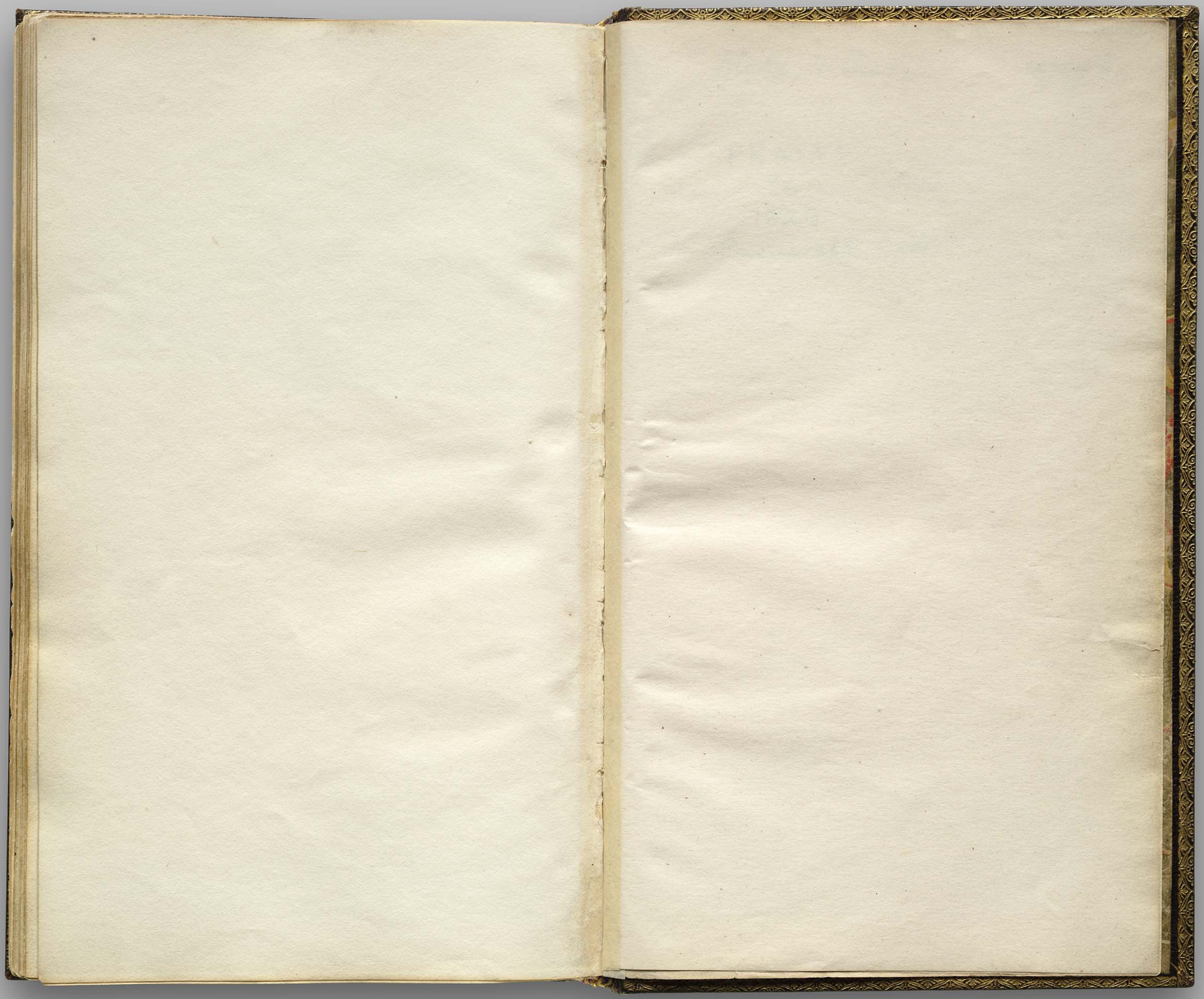

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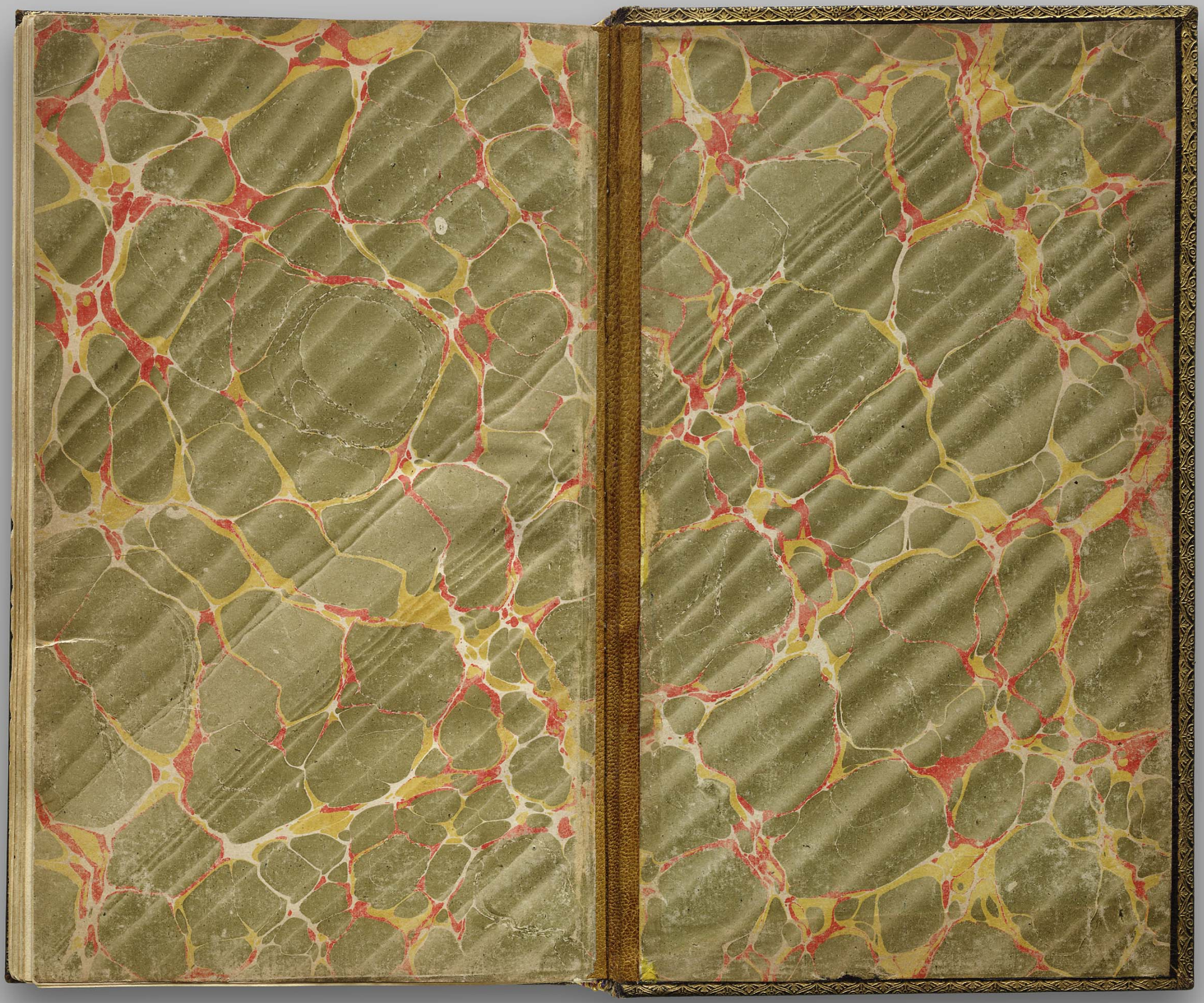

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MANUSCRIPT INDEX

TO THE

SONGS OF INNOCENCE AND OF EXPERIENCE

IN THE

AUTOGRAPH OF WILLIAM BLAKE.

ALSO

A NUMBER OF TRIAL PROOFS OF PLATES FOR THE SONGS.

The following nine plates are, it is believed, engraved by Blake, tho' three only bear his name; and this Manuscript Index to the Songs of Innocence & Experience is supposed to be in Blake's Autograph. The engravings may be regarded as specimens of those 'daily tasks' alluded to in Cunningham's Memoir, by which the Artist maintained himself, and purchased leisure for the indulgence of more favourite pursuits.

EPHEMERA DESCRIPTION

The Order in which the Songs of Innocence & of Experience ought to be paged & placed

Page
1. General Title
2. Frontispiece of Piper
3. Title page to Songs of Innocence
4. Introduction — Piping down the Valleys &c
5 Eccho on Green
6 Ditto
7. The Lamb
8. The Shepherd
9. Infant Joy
10. Little Black Boy
11. Ditto
12. Laughing Song
13. Spring
14. Ditto
15. Cradle Song
16. Ditto
17 Nurses Song
18 Holy Thursday
19. The Blossom
20. The Chimney Sweeper
21. The Divine Image
22. Night
23. Ditto
24. A Dream
25. On Anothers Sorrow
26. The little Boy Lost
27. The Little Boy Found

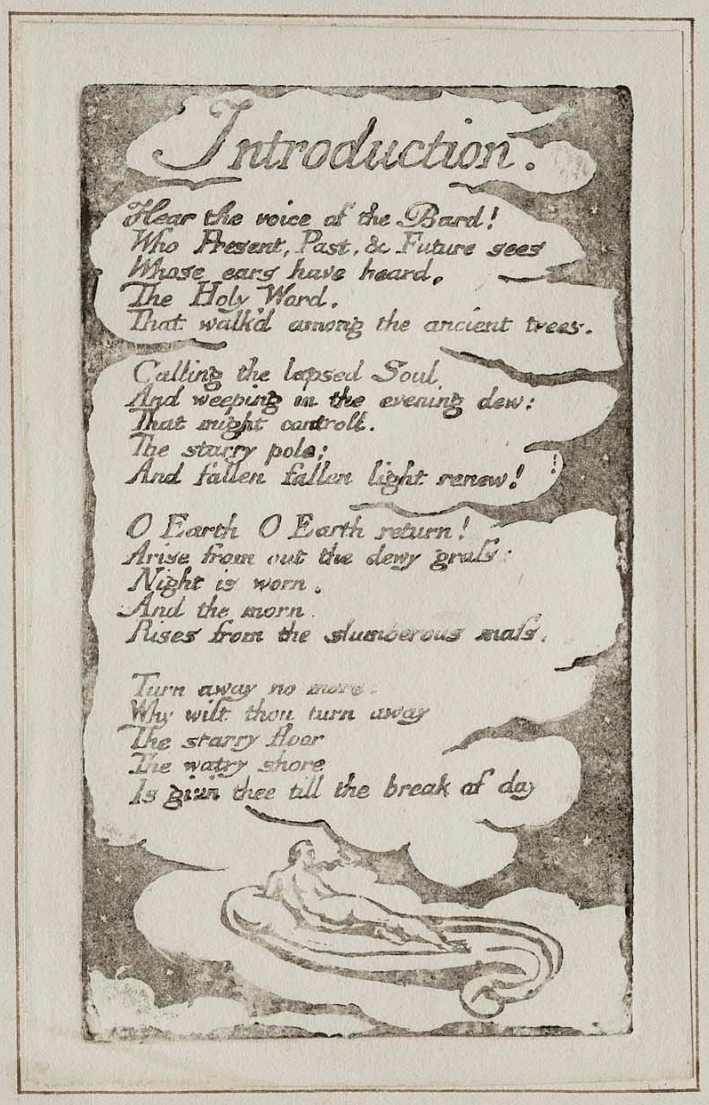
End of Songs of Innocence then Begins Songs of Experience

28 Frontispiece of Child on the Shepherds head
29 Title Page to Songs of Experience
30 Introduction — Hear the Voice of the Bard &c
31 Earths Answer
32 Nurses Song
33 The Fly
34 The Tyger
35 Little Girl Lost
36 Ditto
37 Ditto
38 The Clod & Pebble
39 The Little Vagabond
40 Holy Thursday
41 A Poison Tree
42 The Angel
43 The Sick Rose
44 To Tirzah
45 The Voice of the Ancient Bard
46 My pretty Rose Tree
47 The Garden of Love
48 A Little Boy Lost
49 Infant Sorrow
50 The School Boy
51 London

Page
52 A Little Girl Lost
53 The Chimney Sweeper . A Little Black thing &c
54 The Human Abstract

MANUSCRIPT INDEX, *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*

Songs of Experience



Introduction.

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who Present, Past, & Future sees
Whose ears have heard,
The Holy Word,
That walk'd among the ancient trees.

Calling the lapsed Soul,
And weeping in the evening dew:
That might controll.
The starry pole;
And fallen fallen light renew!

O Earth O Earth return!
Arise from out the dewy grass:
Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumberous mass.

Turn away no more;
Why wilt thou turn away
The starry floor
The watry shore
Is given thee till the break of day

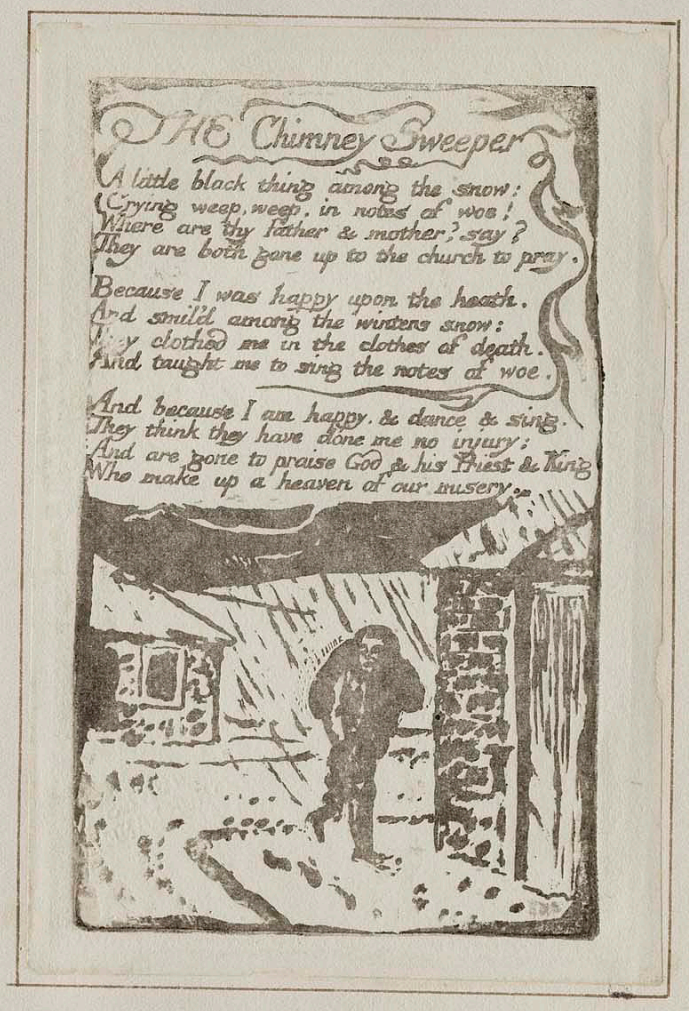
From the Songs of Experience page 4

TRIAL PROOF, INTRODUCTION TO *Songs of Experience*

Songs of Innocence (8)

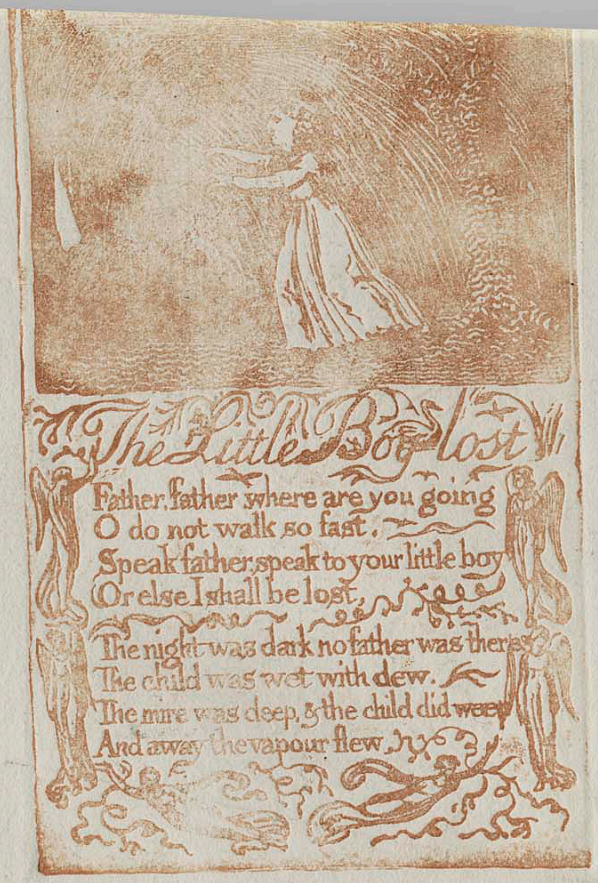
From the Songs of Innocence page 10

TRIAL PROOF, THE BLOSSOM

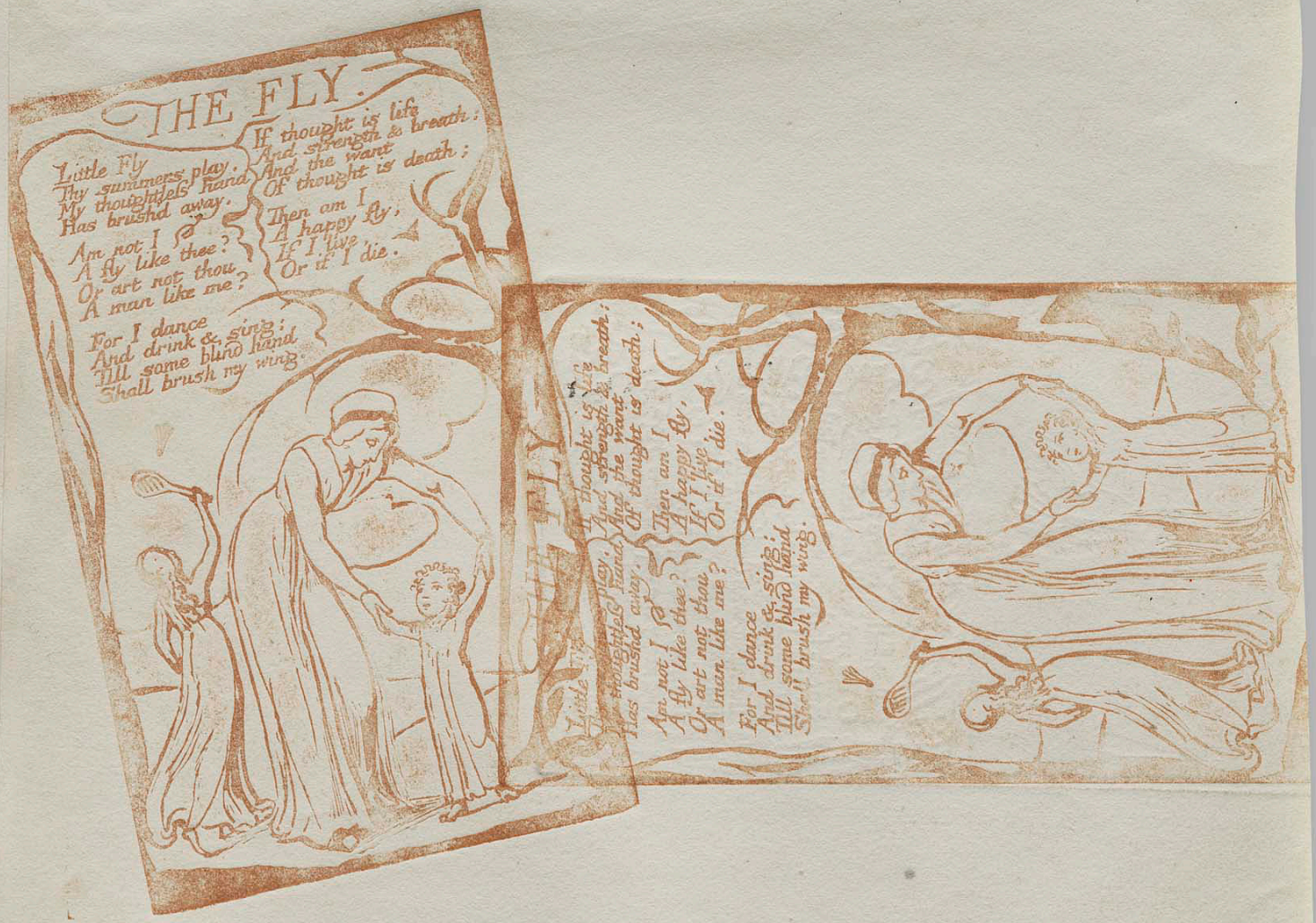


From the Songs of Experience page 11

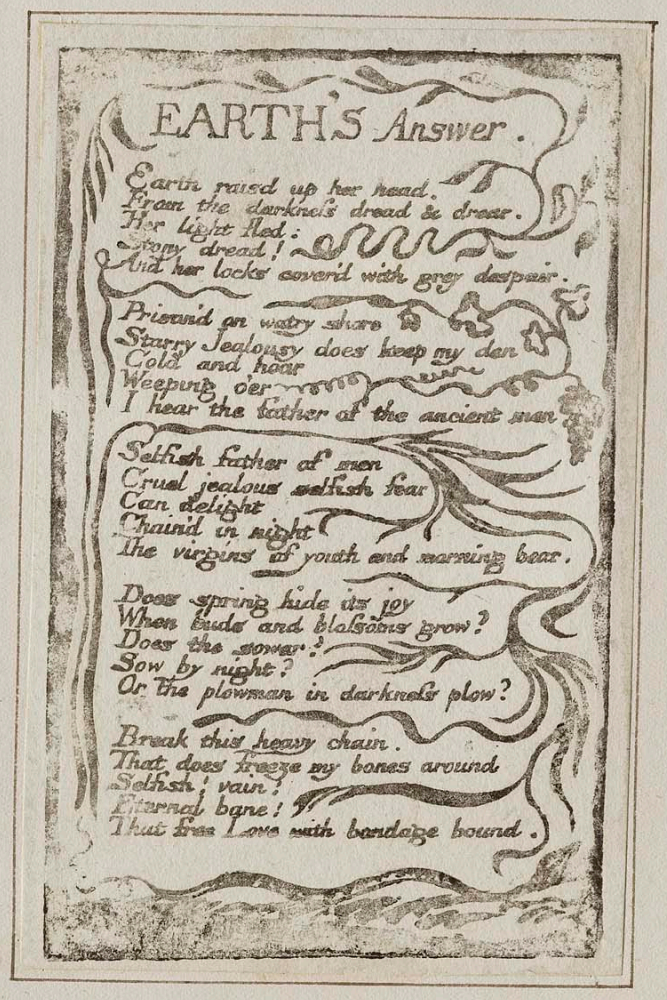
TRIAL PROOF, THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER FROM *Songs of Experience*



TRAIL PROOF, THE LITTLE BOY LOST



TRIAL PROOF, THE FLY



EARTH'S Answer.

Earth raisd up her head.
From the darknes dread & drear.
Her light fled:
Stony dread!
And her locks covered with grey despair.

Prisond on watry shore
Starry Jealousy does keep my den
Cold and hoar
Weeping o'er
I hear the father of the ancient men.

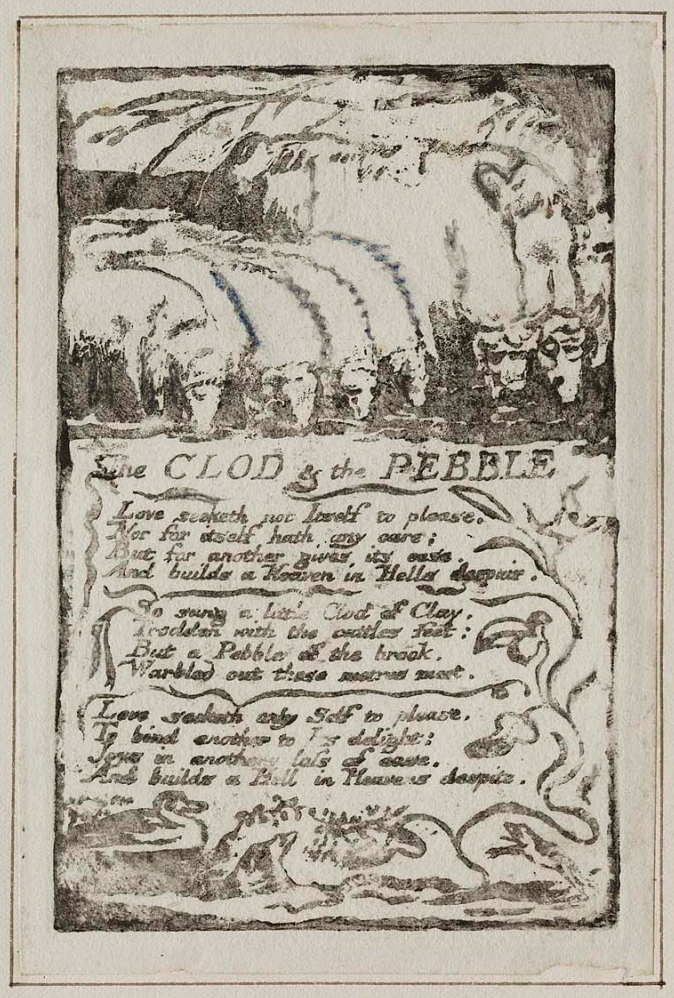
Selfish father of men
Cruel jealous selfish fear
Can delight
Chaind in night
The virgins of youth and morning bear.

Does spring hide its joy
When buds and blossoms grow?
Does the sower
Sow by night?
Or the plowman in darknes plow?

Break this heavy chain.
That does freeze my bones around
Selfish! vain!
Eternal bane!
That free Love with bandage bound.

From the Songs of Experience Page 5

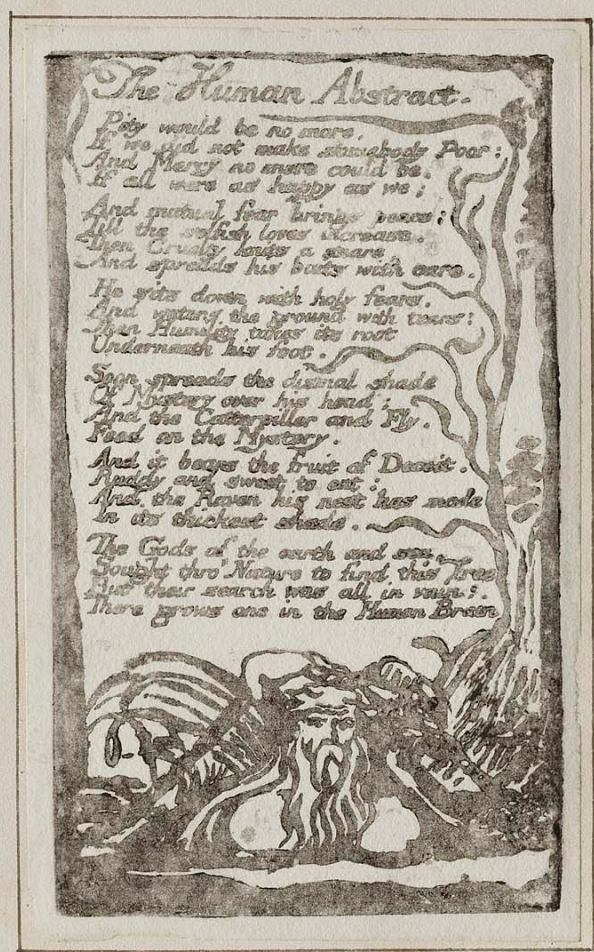
TRIAL PROOF, EARTH'S ANSWER



From the Boy's of Experience page 6

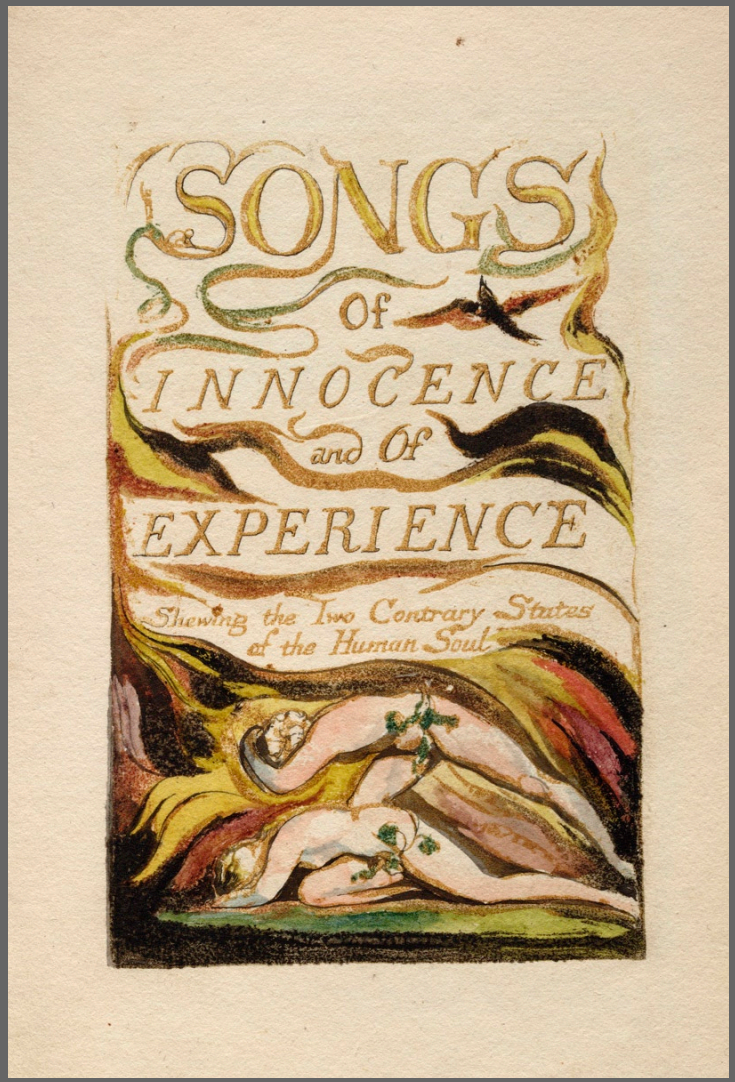
from the Songs of Innocence page 18

TRIAL PROOF, THE GARDEN OF LOVE



From the Songs of Experience page 21

TRIAL PROOF, THE HUMAN ABSTRACT



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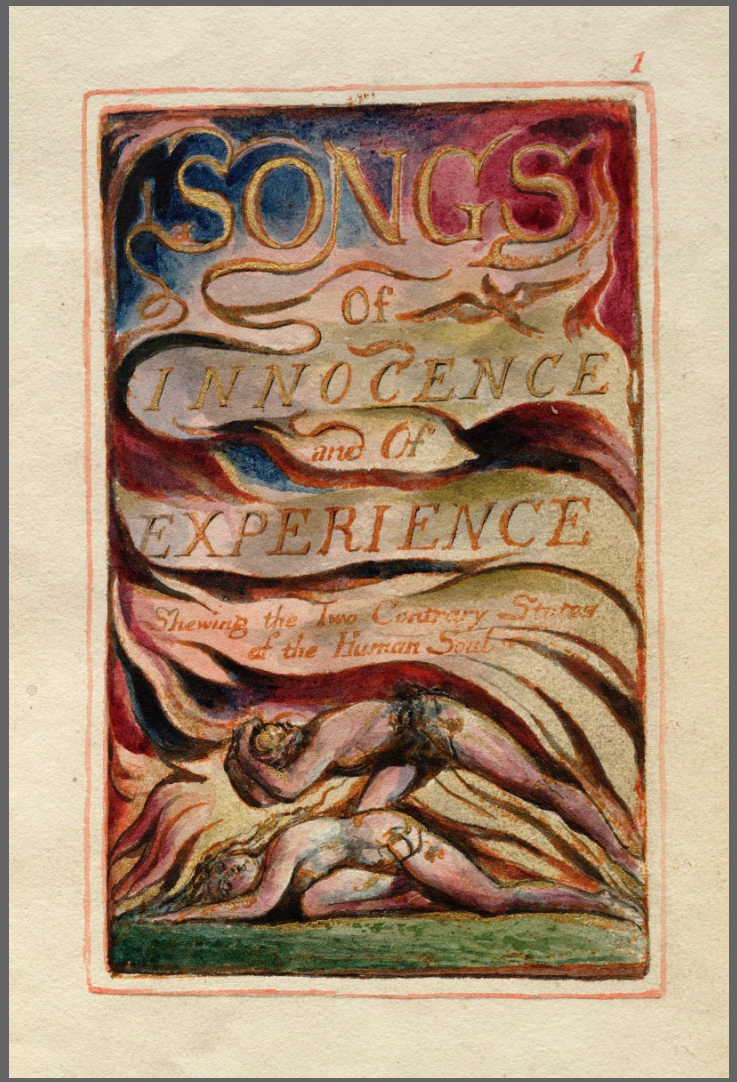

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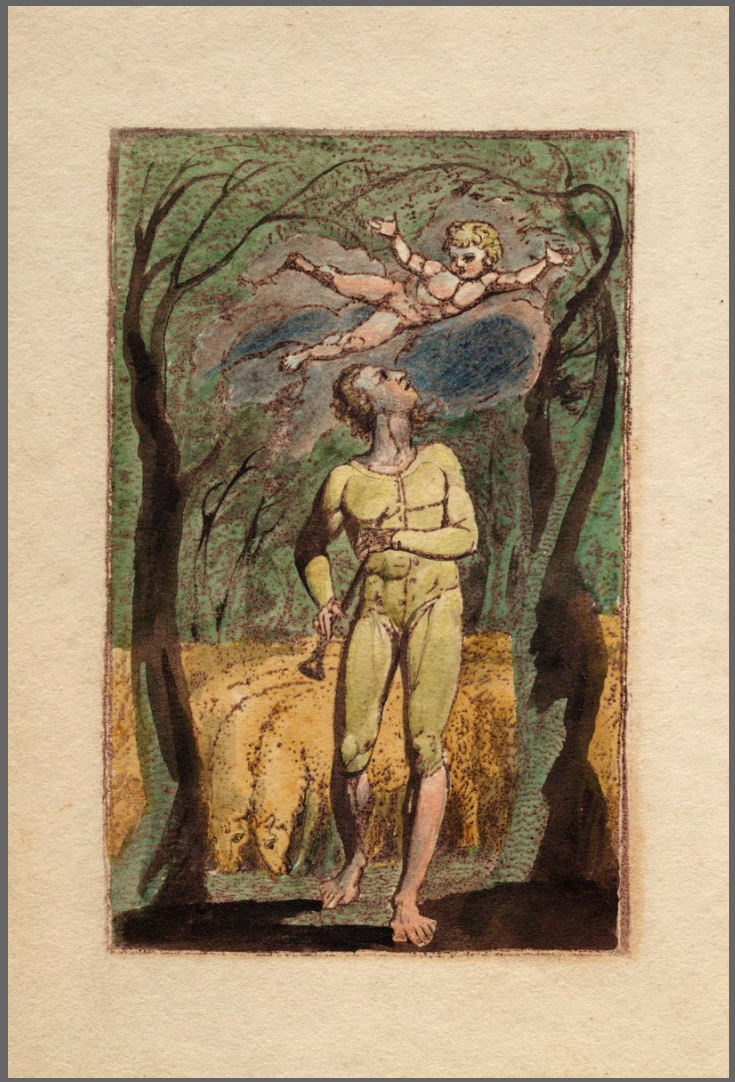

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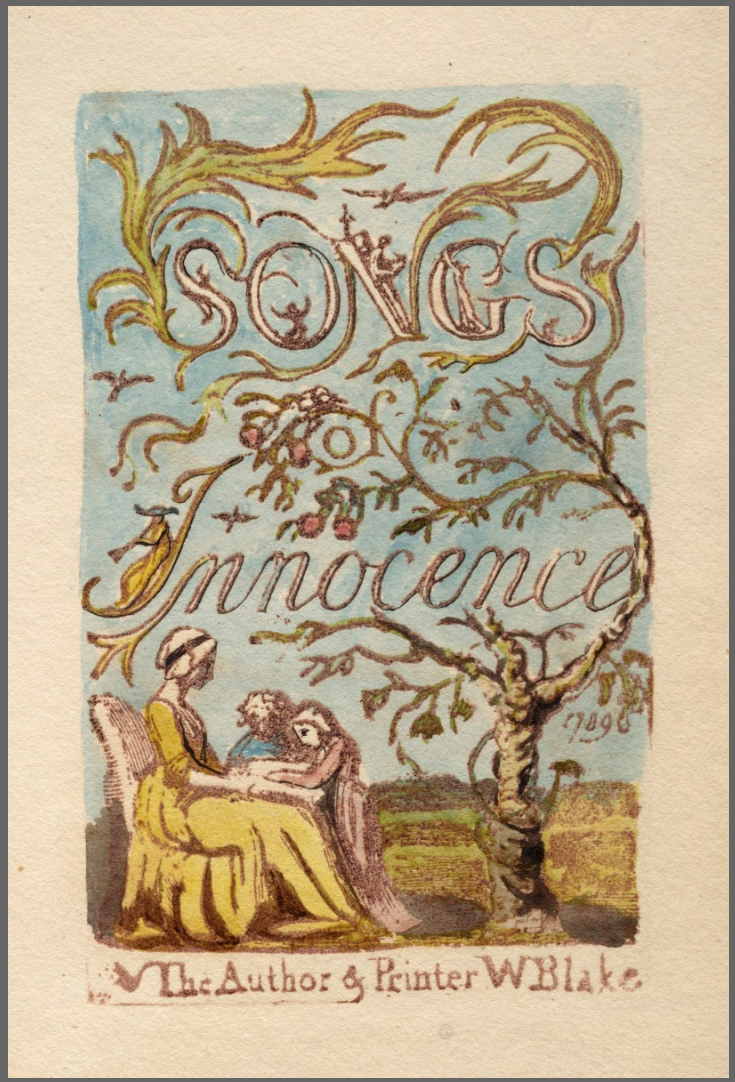
COPY Z, 1826

Frontispiece of Piper



COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Title Page to Songs of Innocence

Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild
Piping songs of pleasant glee
On a cloud I saw a child.
And he laughing said to me:

Pipe a song about a Lamb:
So I piped with merry chear.
Piper pipe that song again —
So I piped, he wept to hear.

Drop thy pipe thy happy pipe
Sing thy songs of happy chear,
So I sung the same again
While he wept with joy to hear

Piper sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read —
So he vanish'd from my sight:
And I pluck'd a hollow reed.

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

COPY C, 1794

4

Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild
Piping songs of pleasant glee
On a cloud I saw a child.
And he laughing said to me:

Pipe a song about a Lamb:
So I piped with merry chear.
Piper pipe that song again —
So I piped, he wept to hear.

Drop thy pipe thy happy pipe
Sing thy songs of happy chear
So I sung the same again
While he wept with joy to hear

Piper sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read —
So he vanish'd from my sight:
And I pluck'd a hollow reed.

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

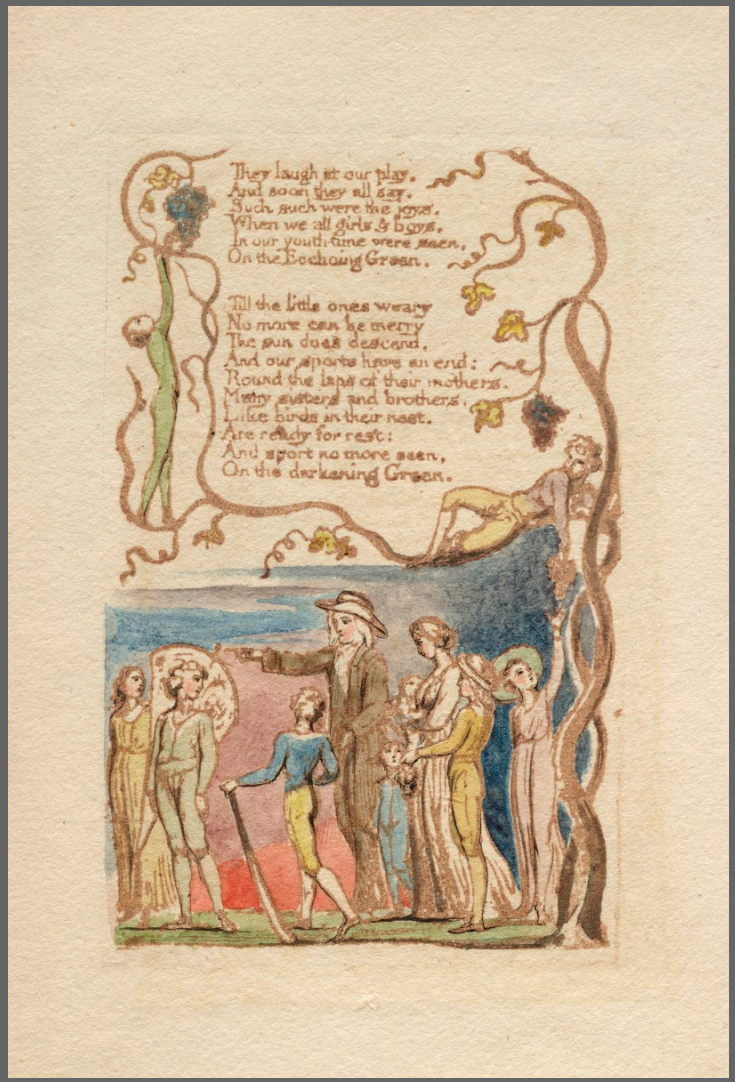
COPY Z, 1826

Introduction

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Ecchoing Green



COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Ecchoing Green (continued)

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Lamb

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Shepherd

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Infant Joy

The Little Black Boy

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but O! my soul is white.
White as an angel is the English child:
But I am black as if bereavd of light.

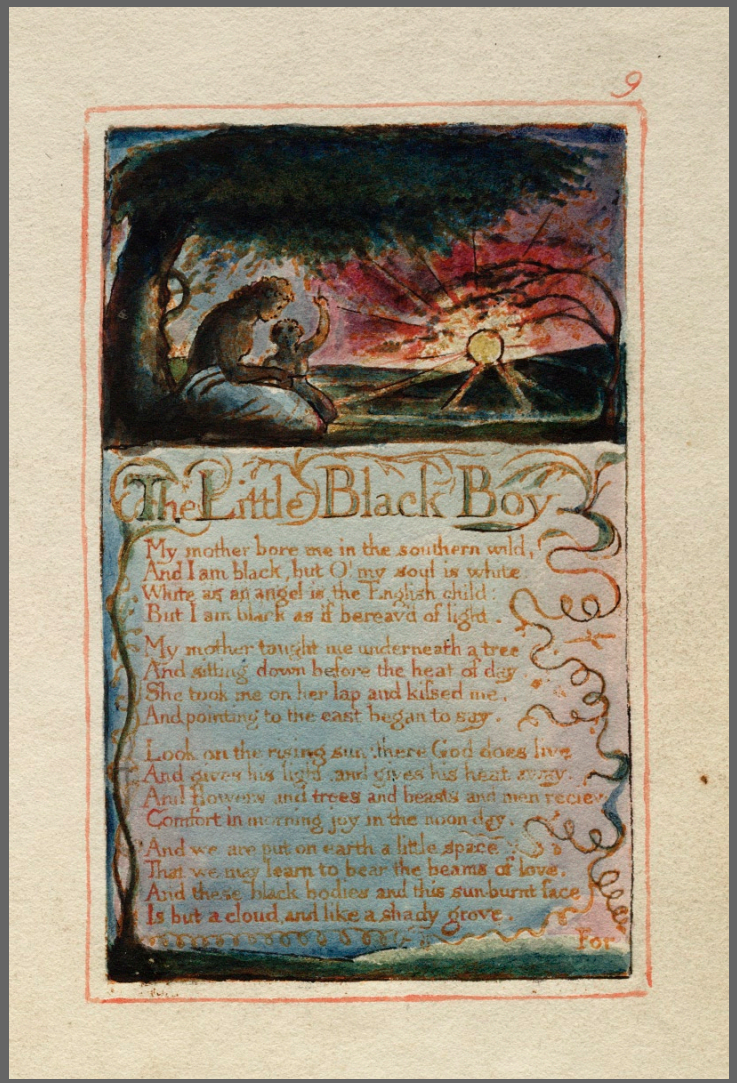
My mother taught me underneath a tree
And sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissed me,
And pointing to the east began to say.

Look on the rising sun: there God does live
And gives his light, and gives his heat away.
And flowers and trees and beasts and men recieve
Comfort in morning joy in the noon day.

And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love.
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

For

COPY C, 1794



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For

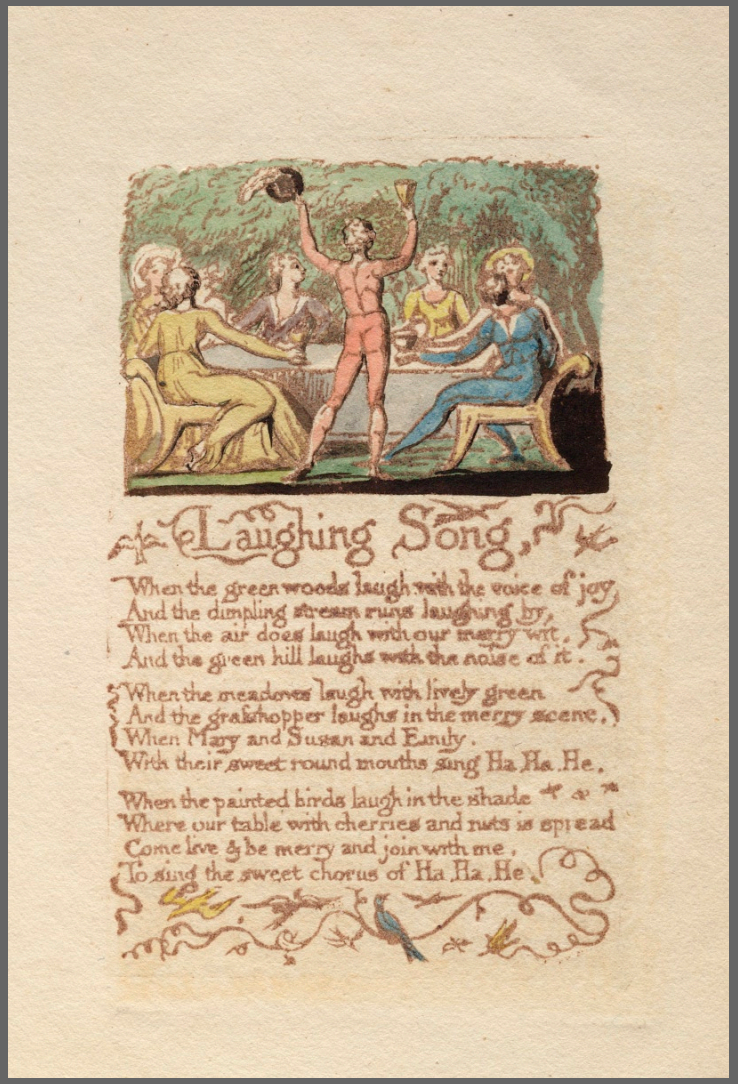
COPY Z, 1826

The Little Black Boy

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Little Black Boy (continued)



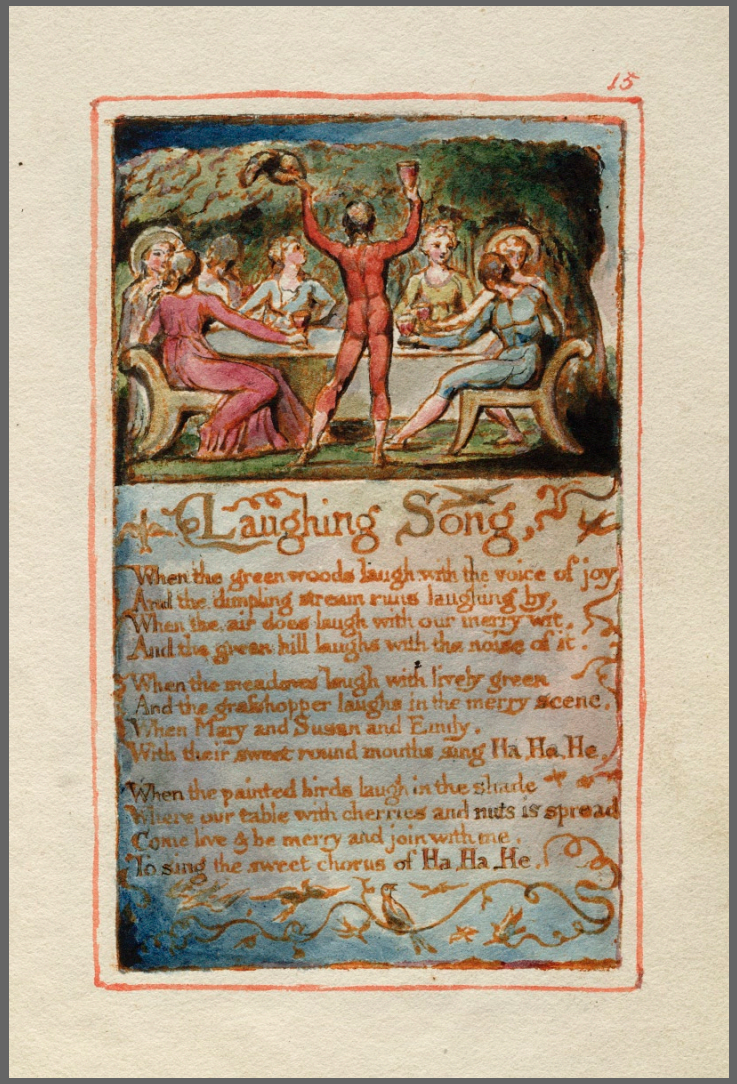
Laughing Song.

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by,
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it.

When the meadows laugh with lively green
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene,
When Mary and Susan and Emily,
With their sweet round mouths sing Ha, Ha, He,

When the painted birds laugh in the shade
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread
Come live & be merry and join with me,
To sing the sweet chorus of Ha, Ha, He.

COPY C, 1794



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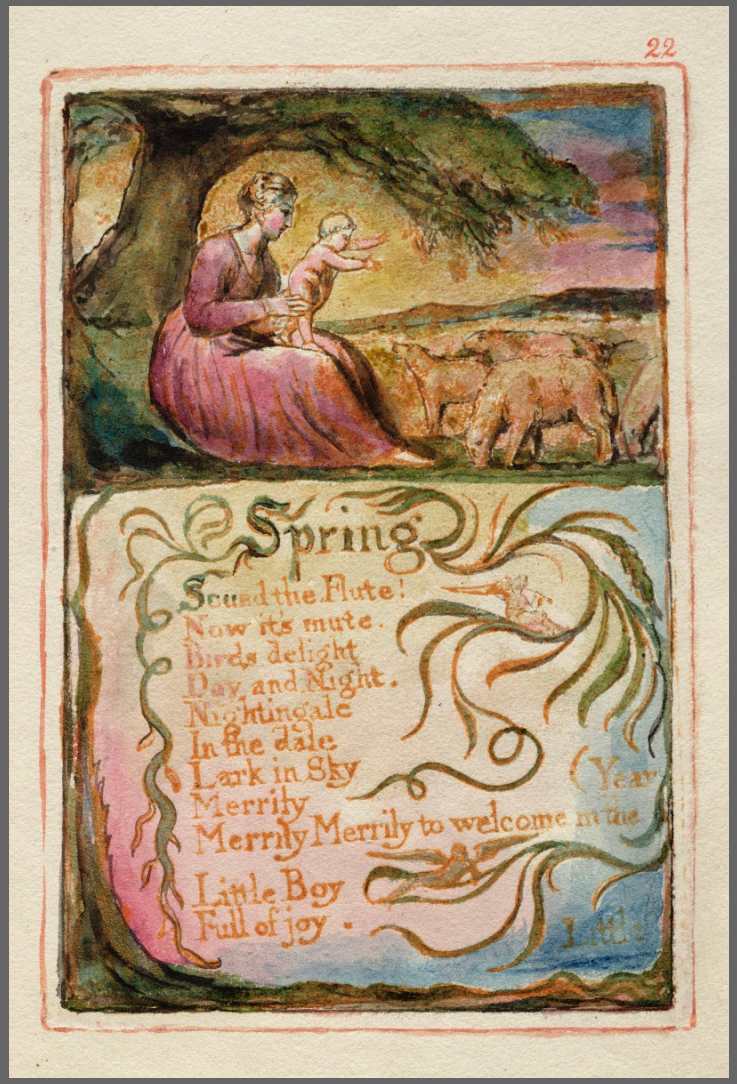
COPY Z, 1826

Laughing Song

COPY C, 1794



COPY Z, 1826

Spring

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Spring (continued)

A CRADLE SONG

Sweet dreams form a shade
O'er my lovely infants head.
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams.
By happy silent moony beams.

Sweet sleep with soft down.
Weave thy brows an infant crown.
Sweet sleep Angel mild,
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles in the night.
Hover over my delight.
Sweet smiles Mothers smiles
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs.
Chase not slumber from thy eyes.
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles.
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep sleep happy child.
All creation slept and smild.
Sleep sleep, happy sleep.
While o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe in thy face.
Holy image I can trace.
Sweet babe once like thee.
Thy maker lay and wept for me

Wept

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

A Cradle Song

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

A Cradle Song (continued)

COPY C, 1794

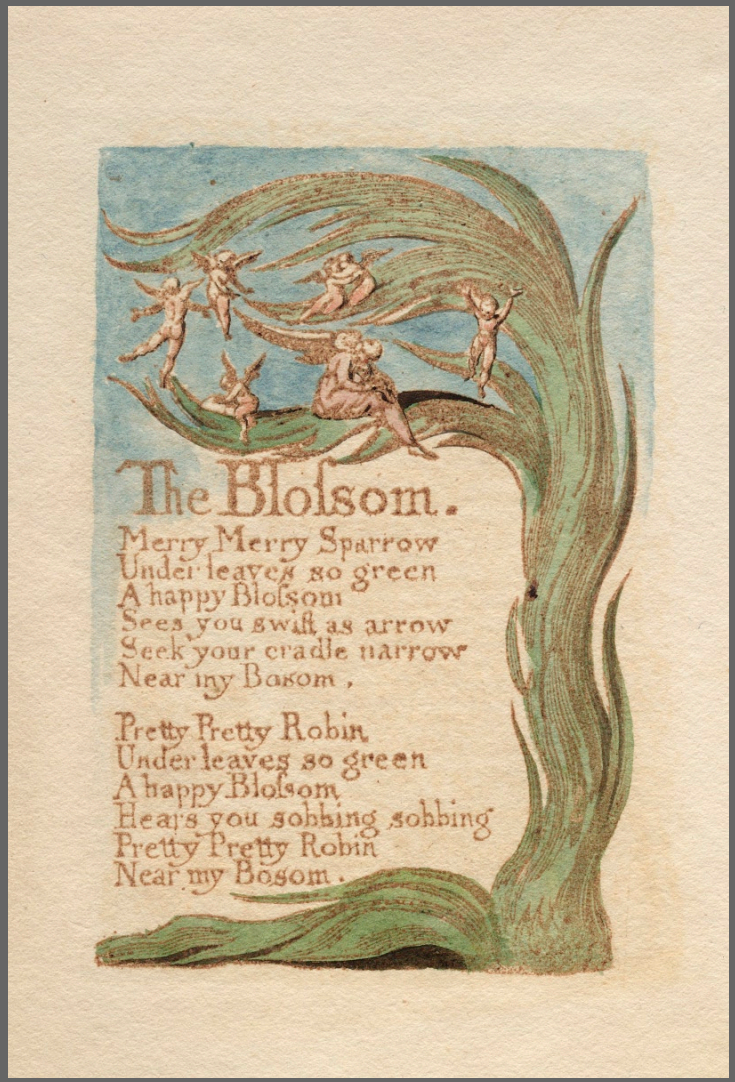
COPY Z, 1826

Nurse's Song

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

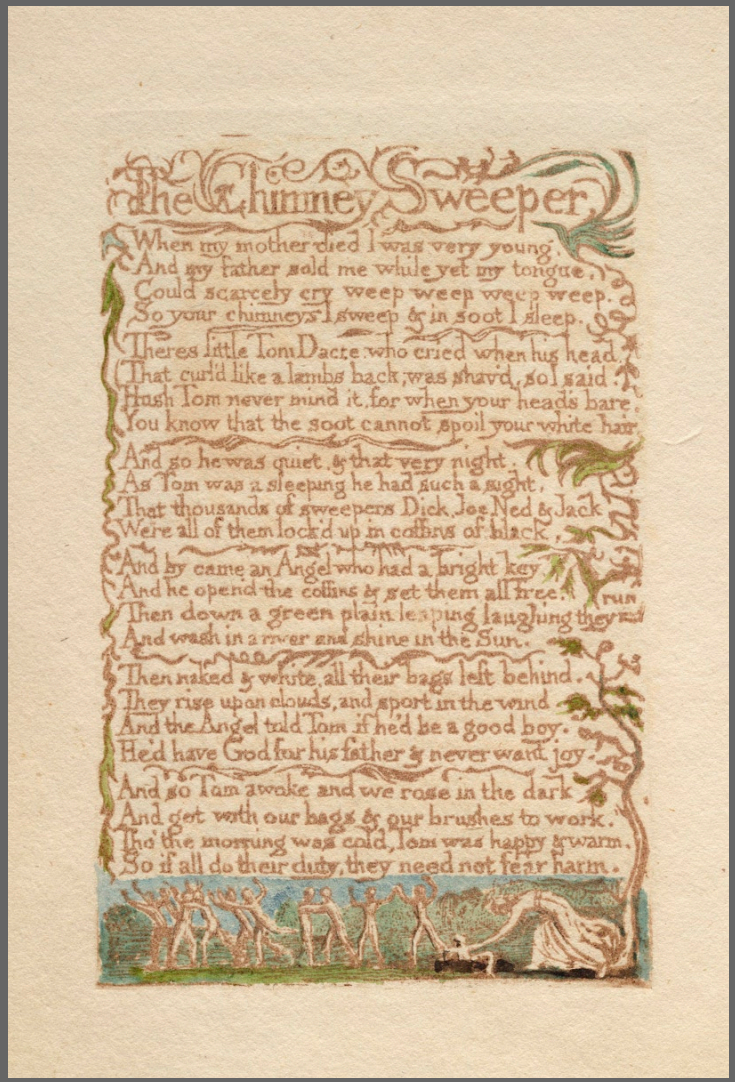
Holy Thursday



COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Blossom



The Chimney Sweeper.

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue,
Could scarcely cry weep weep weep weep.
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre who cried when his head,
That curl'd like a lambs back, was shav'd, so I said:
Hush Tom never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.

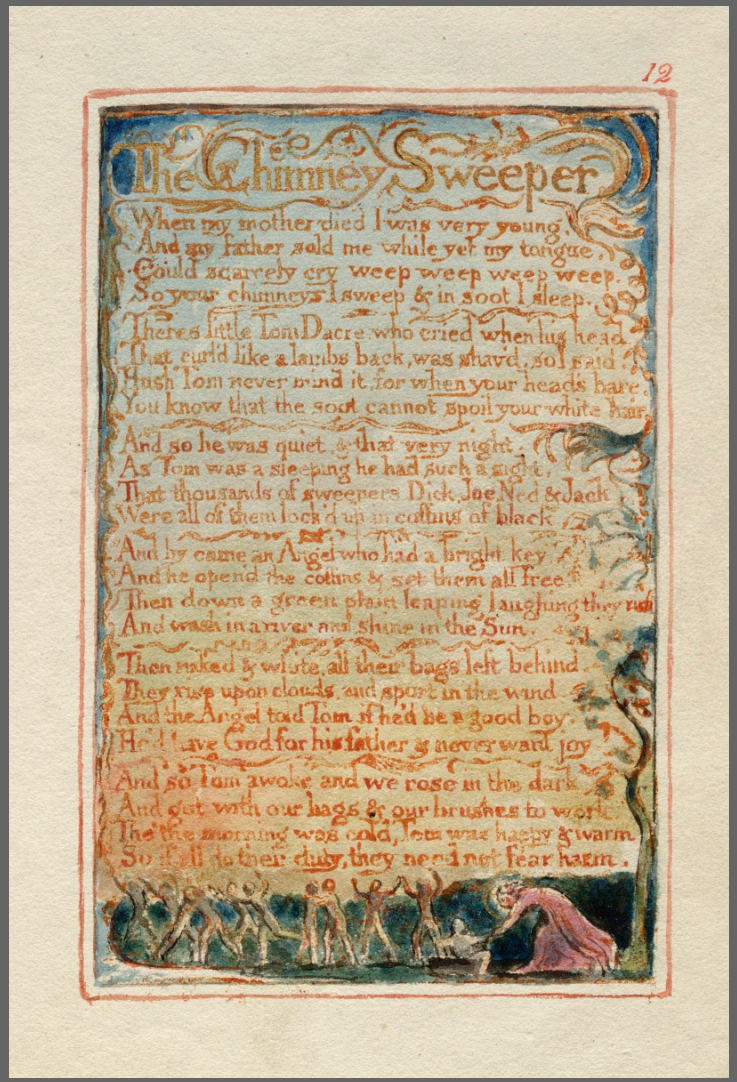
And so he was quiet, & that very night,
As Tom was a sleeping he had such a sight,
That thousands of sweepers Dick, Joe, Ned & Jack
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,
And he opend the coffins & set them all free.
Then down a green plain leaping laughing they run
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.
And the Angel told Tom if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke and we rose in the dark
And get with our bags & our brushes to work.
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm,
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

COPY C, 1794



12

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COPY Z, 1826

The Chimney Sweeper

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Divine Image

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Night

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Night (continued)

[Bound into Songs of Experience in Copy C.]

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

A Dream

On Anothers Sorrow

Can I see anothers woe.
And not be in sorrow too.
Can I see anothers grief.
And not seek for kind relief.

Can I see a falling tear.
And not feel my sorrows share.
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd.

Can a mother sit and hear.
An infant groan an infant fear.—
No no never can it be.
Never never can it be.

And can he who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small.
Hear the small birds grief & care
Hear the woes that infants bear.—

And not sit beside the nest
Pouring pity in their breast.
And not sit the cradle near
Weeping tear an infants tear.

And not sit both night & day.
Wiping all our tears away.
O! no never can it be.
Never never can it be.

He doth give his joy to all.
He becomes an infant small.
He becomes a man of woe
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh.
And thy maker is not by.
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy maker is not near.

O! he gives to us his joy.
That our grief he may destroy
Till our grief is fled & gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

COPY C, 1794

27

On Anothers Sorrow

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COPY Z, 1826

On Anothers Sorrow

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Little Boy Lost

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Little Boy Found

COPY C, 1794

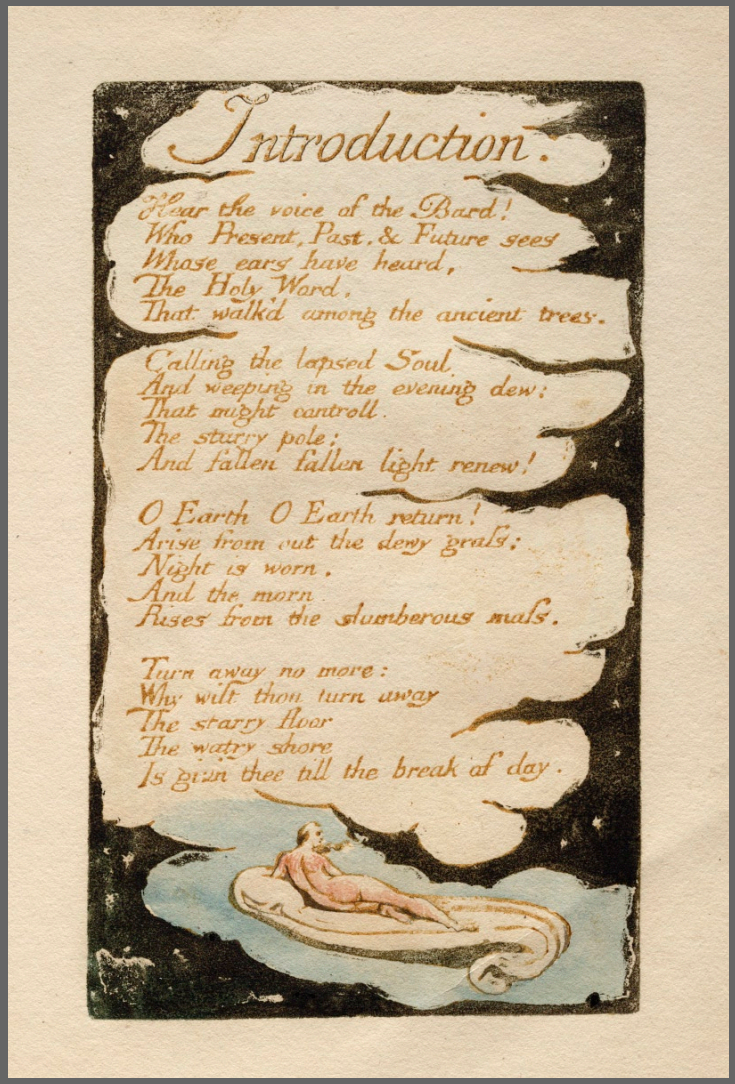
COPY Z, 1826

Frontispiece of Child on the Shepherd's Head

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Title Page to Songs of Experience



Introduction.

Hear the voice of the Bard!
Who Present, Past, & Future sees
Whose ears have heard,
The Holy Word,
That walk'd among the ancient trees.

Calling the lapsed Soul,
And weeping in the evening dew:
That might controll
The starry pole;
And fallen fallen light renew!

O Earth O Earth return!
Arise from out the dewy grass:
Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumberous mass.

Turn away no more:
Why wilt thou turn away
The starry floor
The watry shore
Is given thee till the break of day.

COPY C, 1794

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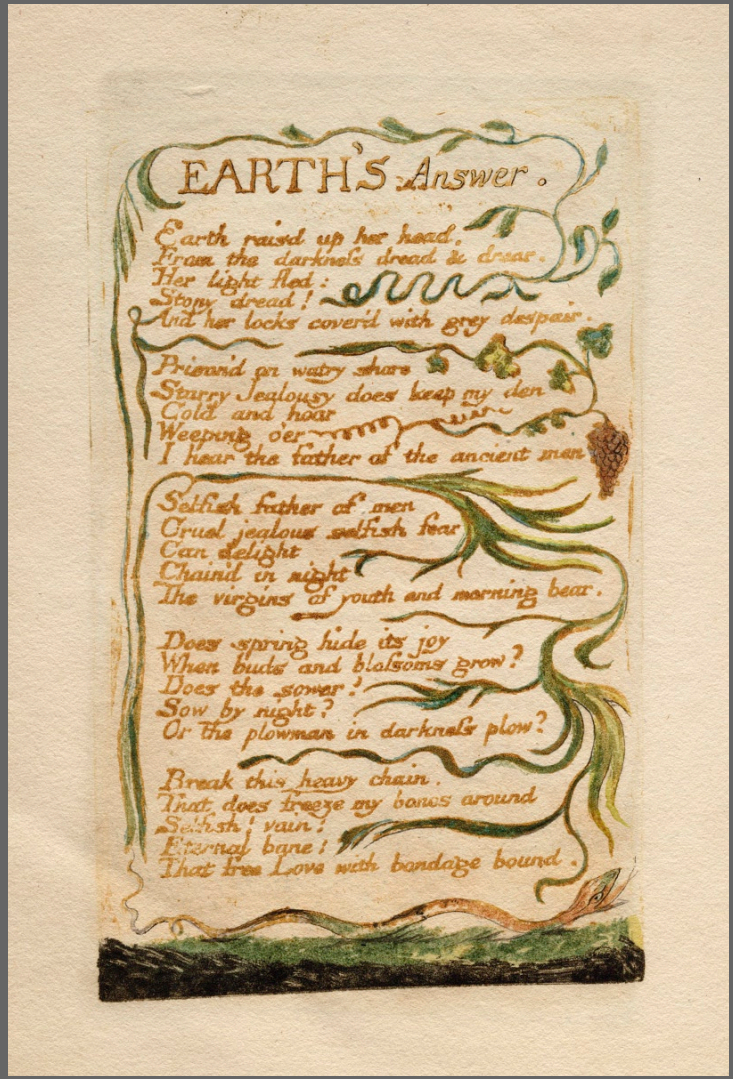
COPY Z, 1826

Introduction



COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Earth's Answer

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Nurses Song

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Fly

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Tyger

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Little Girl Lost

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Little Girl Lost (continued)/ The Little Girl Found

Famish'd weeping weak
With hollow piteous shriek.

Rising from unrest,
The trembling woman prest,
With feet of weary woe;
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore
Her arm'd with sorrow sore;
Till before their way,
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain,
Soon his heavy mane
Bore them to the ground;
Then he stalk'd around,

Smelling to his prey,
But their fears allay
When he licks their hands,
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes
Filled with deep surprise;
And wondering behold
A spirit arm'd in gold.

On his head a crown.
On his shoulders down
Flow'd his golden hair.
Gone was all their care.

Follow me he said,
Weep not for the maid;
In my palace deep,
Lyca lies asleep.

Then they followed,
Where the vision led;
And saw their sleeping child,
Among tygers wild.

To this day they dwell
In a lonely dell,
Nor fear the wolvish howl,
Nor the lions growl.

COPY C, 1794

36

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COPY Z, 1826

The Little Girl Found (continued)

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Clod & the Pebble

COPY C, 1794

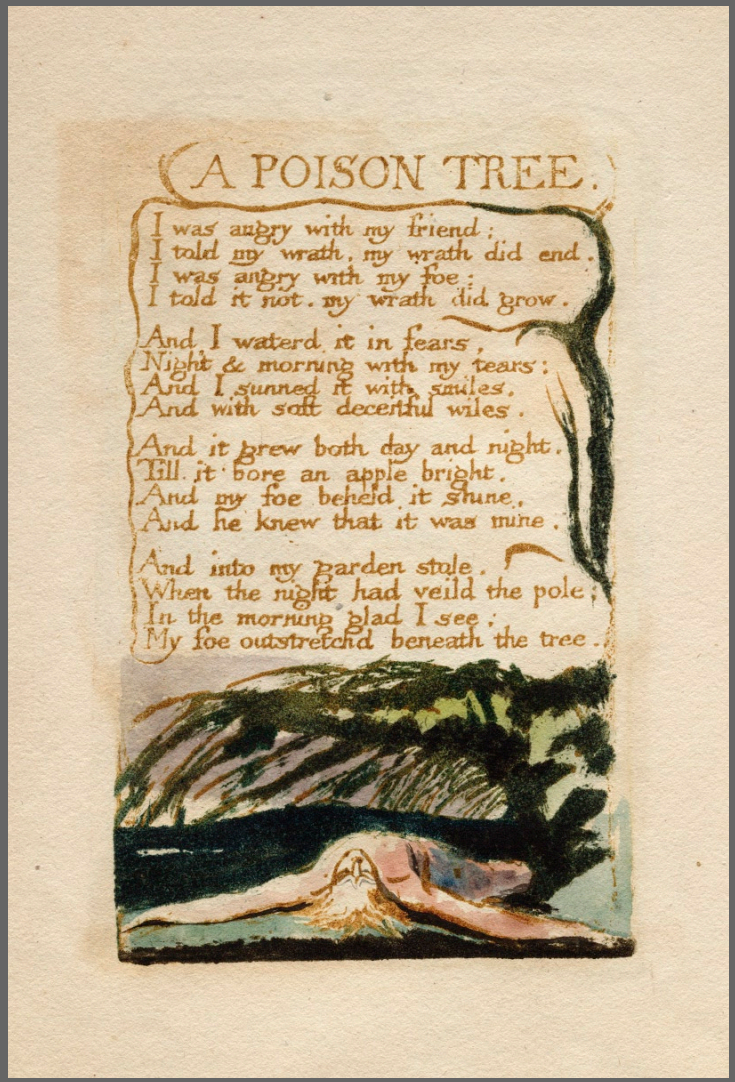
COPY Z, 1826

The Little Vagabond

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Holy Thursday



COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

A Poison Tree

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Angel

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Sick Rose

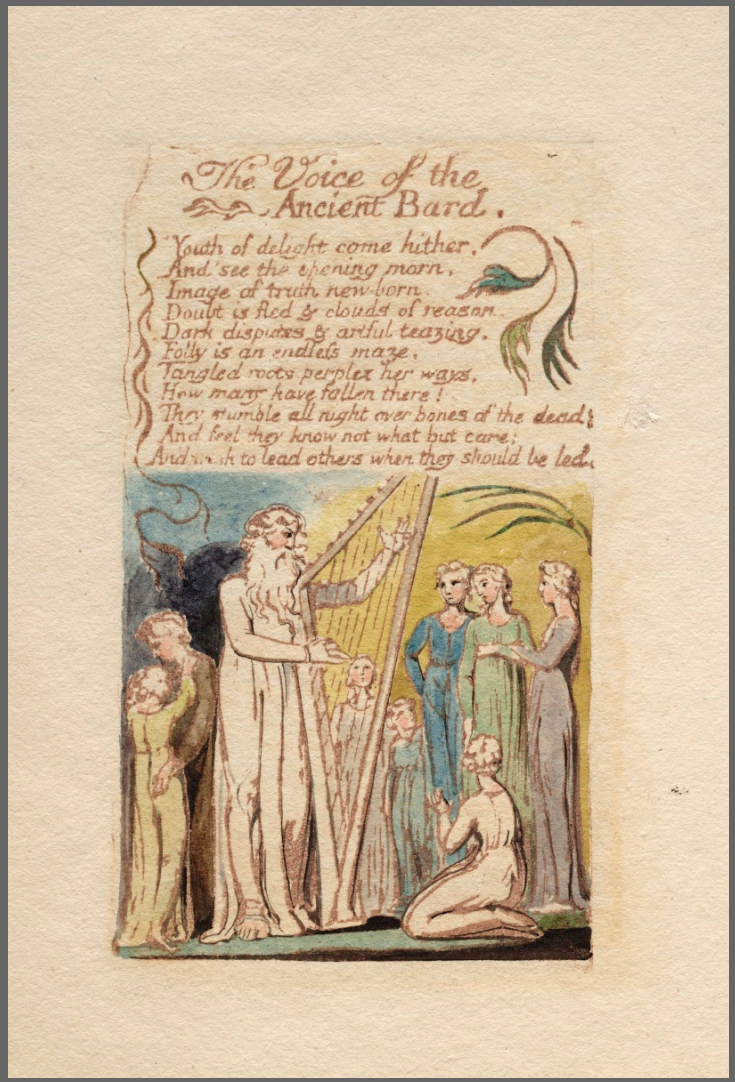
[“To Tirzah” not included in Copy C.]

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

To Tirzah

[Bound into Songs of Innocence in Copy C.]



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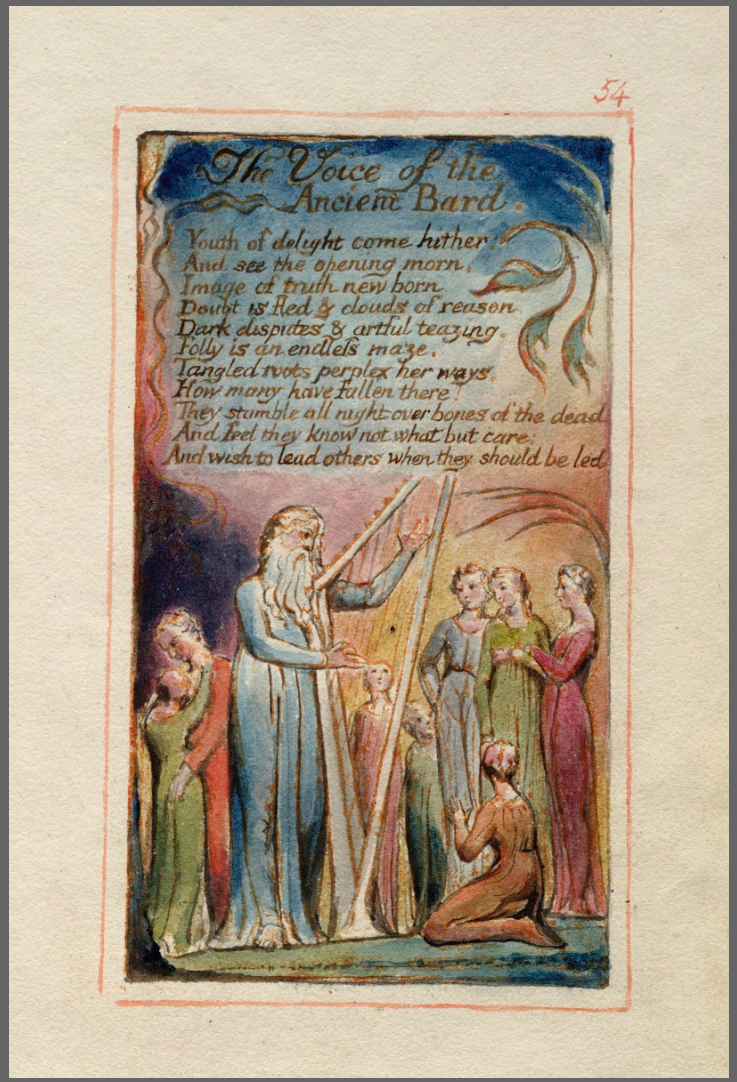
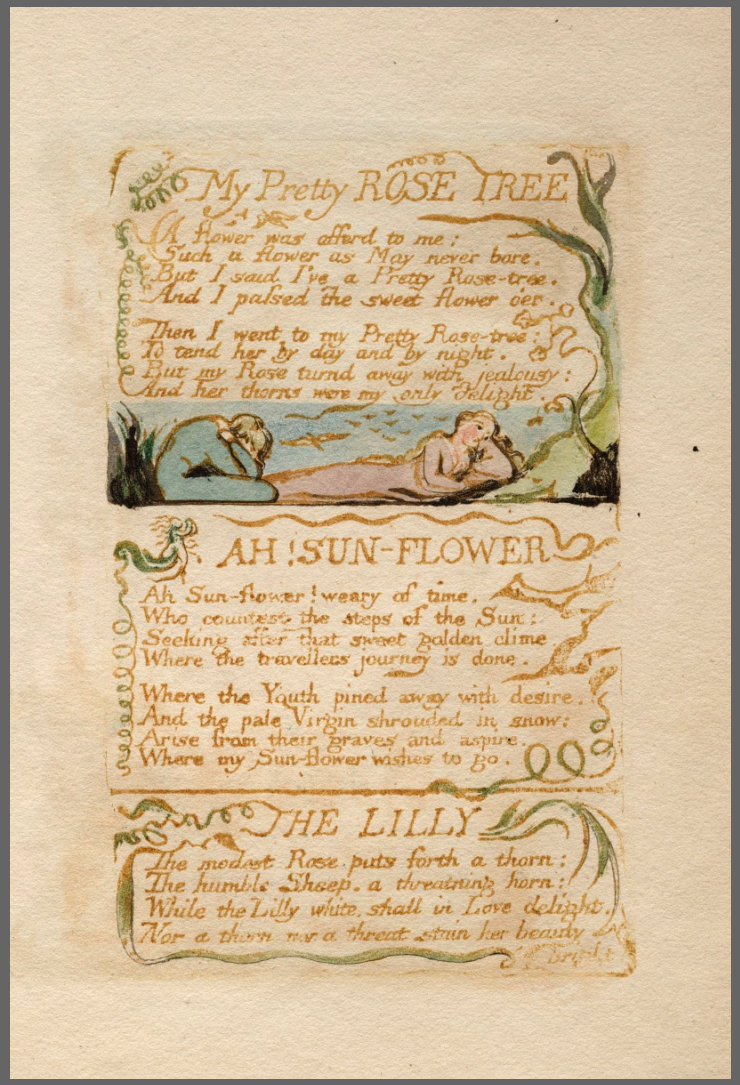


COPY Z, 1826

The Voice of the Ancient Bard



COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

My Pretty Rose Tree / Ah! Sun-flower / The Lilly

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

The Garden of Love

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

A Little Boy Lost

COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

Infant Sorrow

[Bound into Songs of Innocence in Copy C.]

The School Boy

I love to rise in a summer morn,
When the birds sing on every tree;
The distant huntsman winds his horn,
And the sky-lark sings with me.
O! what sweet company.

But to go to school in a summer morn,
O! it drives all joy away!
Under a cruel eye outworn.
The little ones spend the day.
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit.
And spend many an anxious hour,
Nor in my book can I take delight,
Nor sit in learnings bower,
Worn thro' with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy,
Sit in a cage and sing.
How can a child when fears annoy,
But droop his tender wing.
And forget his youthful spring.

O father & mother, if buds are nip'd,
And blossoms blown away.
And if the tender plants are strip'd
Of their joy in the springing day.
By sorrow and cares dismay.

How shall the summer arise in joy,
Or the summer fruits appear.
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy
Or bless the mellowing year.
When the blasts of winter appear.

COPY C, 1794

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COPY Z, 1826

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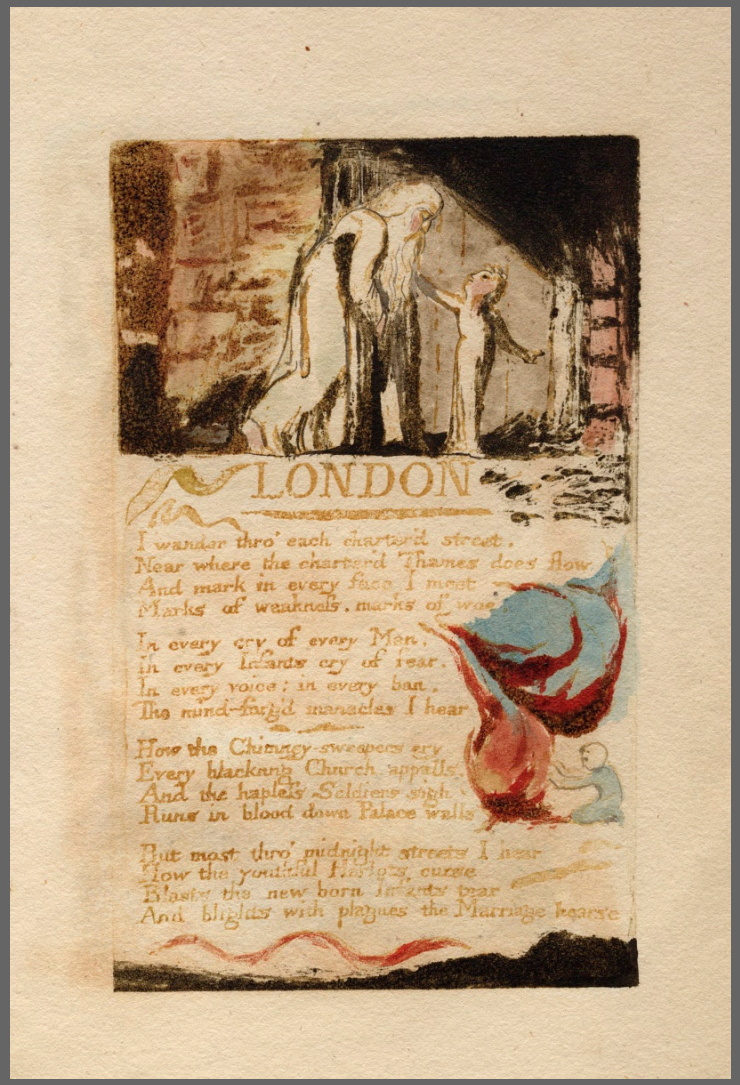
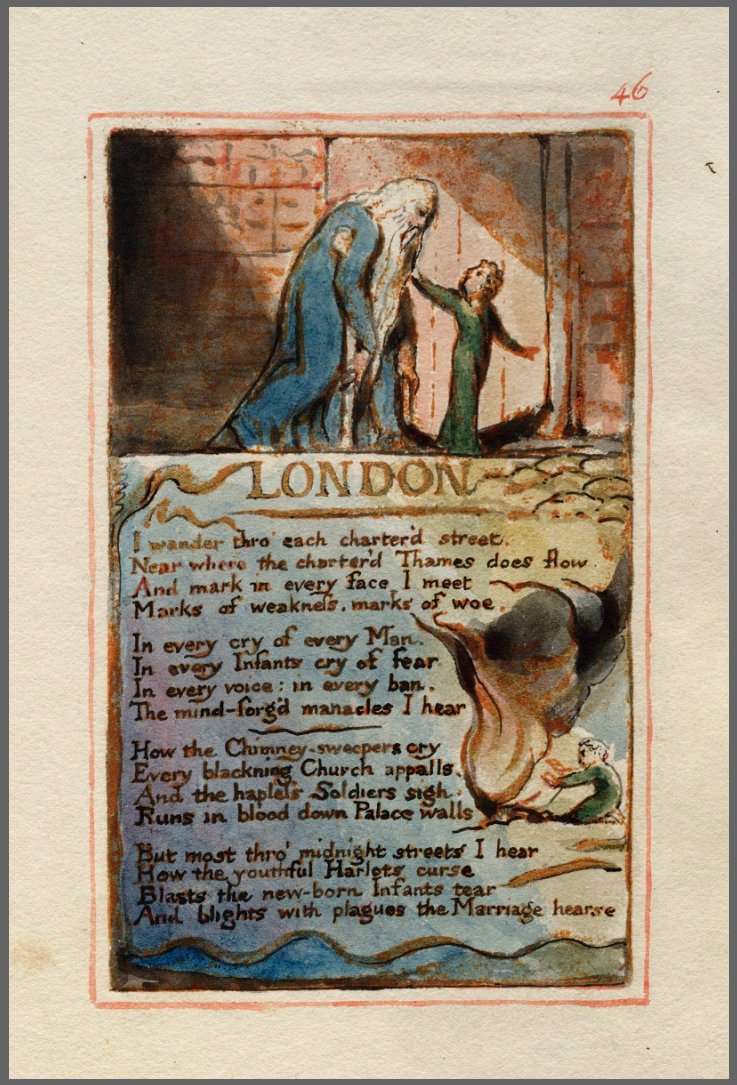
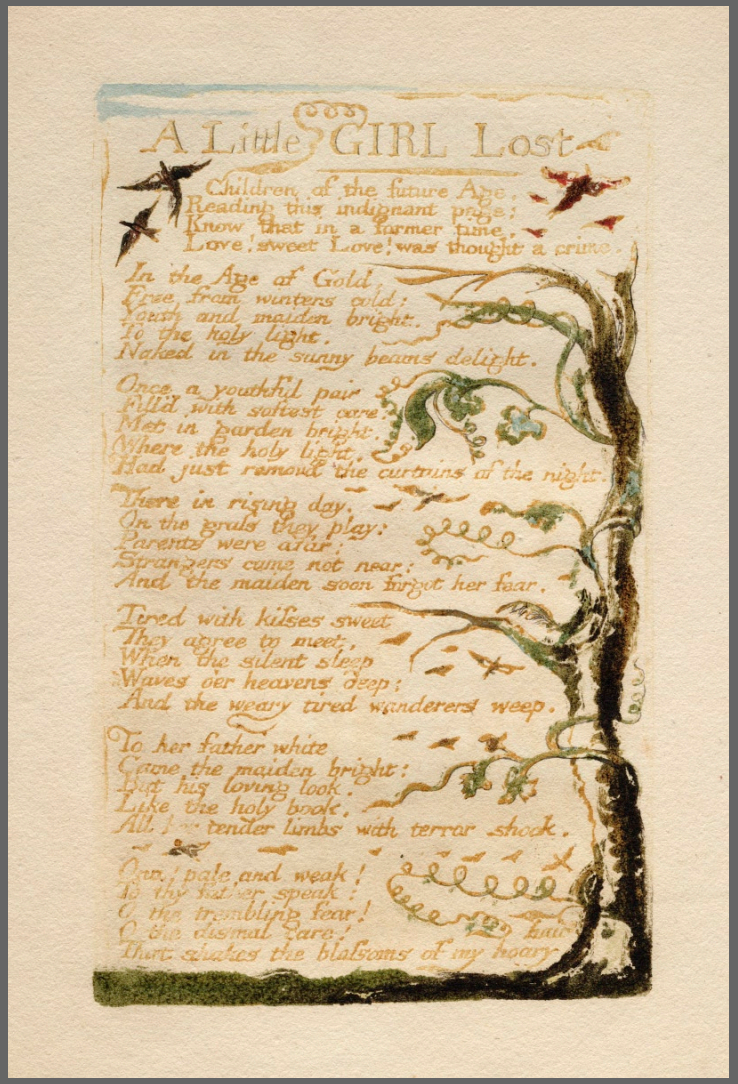


COPY C, 1794



COPY Z, 1826

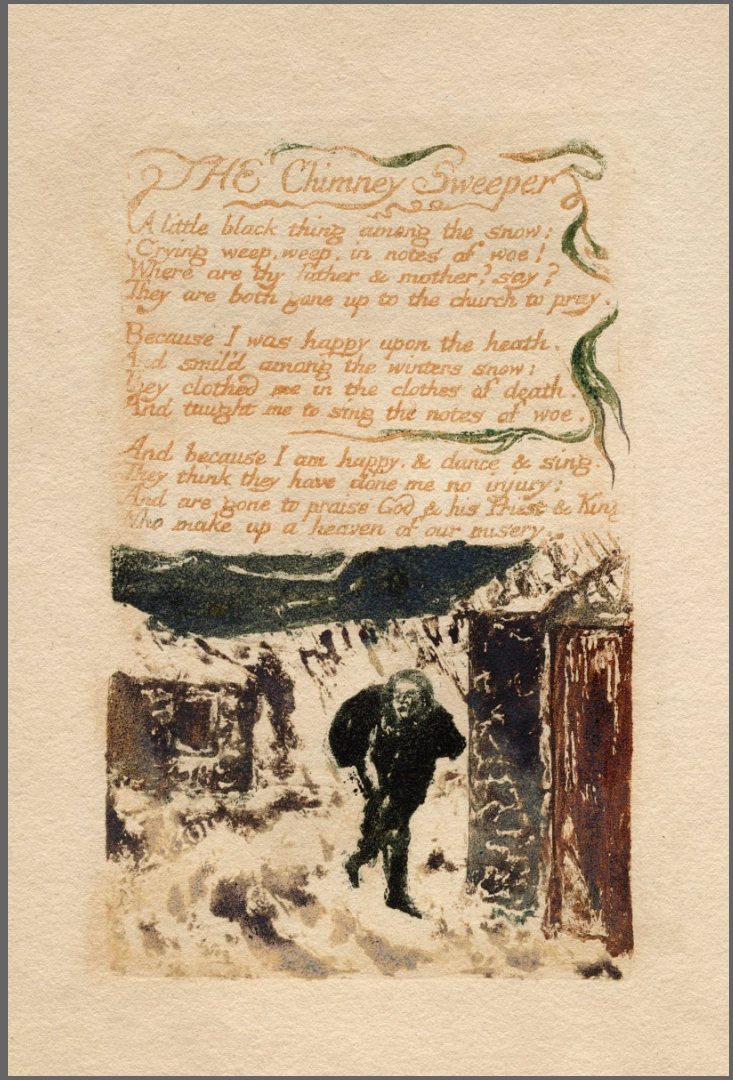
London



COPY C, 1794

COPY Z, 1826

A Little Girl Lost



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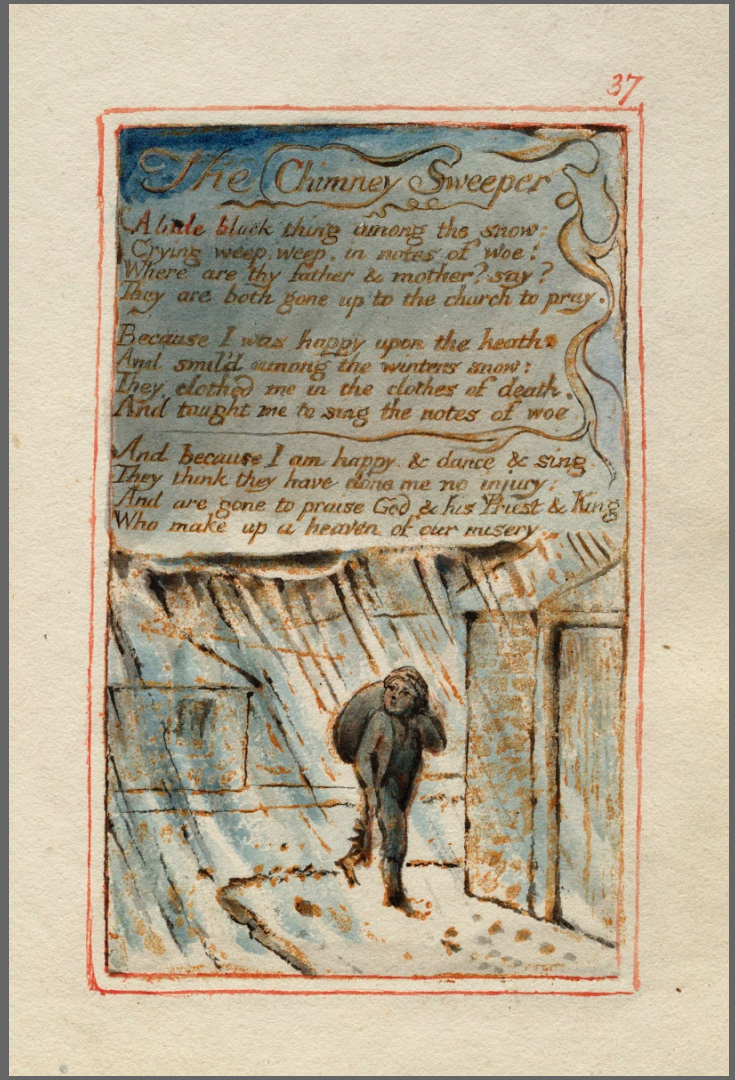
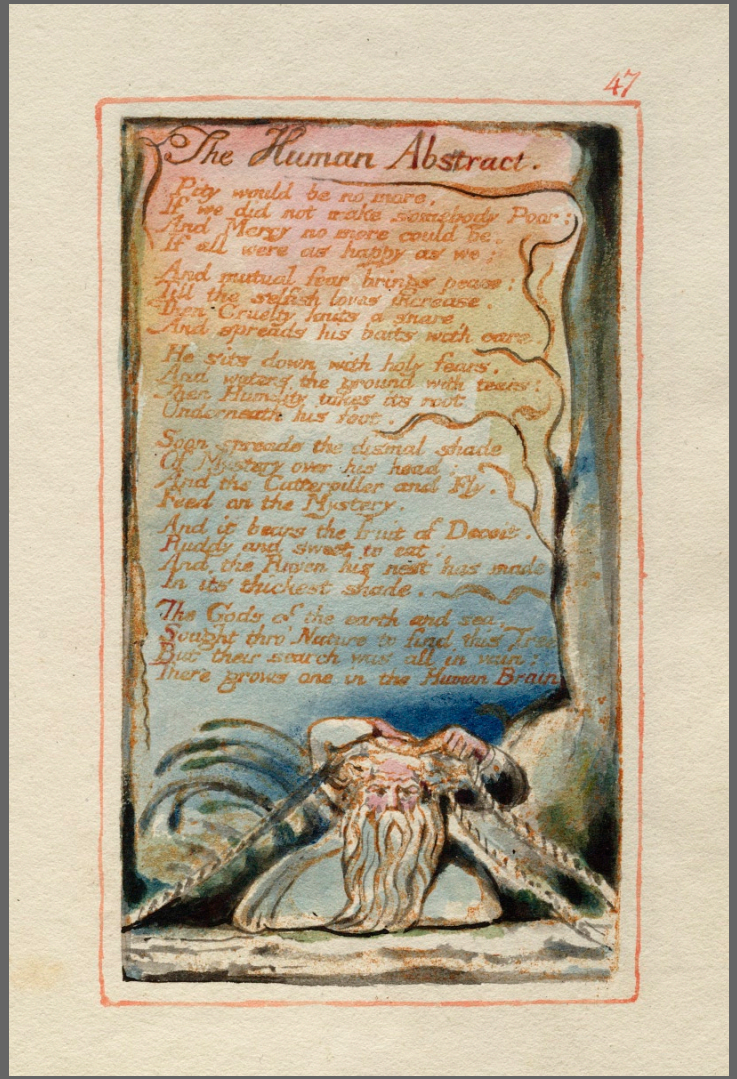


COPY Z, 1826

The Chimney Sweeper

COPY C, 1794



COPY Z, 1826

The Human Abstract

Library of Congress

The Library of Congress is the world's largest library, containing more than 115 million items in nearly every language and format—from ancient Chinese woodblock prints to compact discs. Founded in 1800 to serve the reference needs of Congress, the Library is now recognized as the national library of the United States, charged with the acquisition, organization, and preservation of a comprehensive record of American history. It has, moreover, grown into an unparalleled treasure-house of human knowledge and creativity, adding materials to its collections at a rate of 10,000 items per working day and making many of these available electronically at *www.loc.gov*.

RARE BOOK AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DIVISION

Although there was no separate Rare Book Division in the early years of the Library, a gathering of rare books, pamphlets, and broadsides was stored in the office of Ainsworth Rand Spofford, Librarian of Congress from 1864 to 1897. The institution had also actively acquired collections that contained rare materials throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including John Boyd Thacher's collections of early printed books, autographs of European notables, and materials on the French Revolution. By 1927, the Library's considerable number of rare books necessitated the creation of a special section to house and care for them. The Rare Book and Special Collections Division moved into its present reading room in 1934.

Today the holdings of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division amount to approximately 800,000 books, broadsides, pamphlets, theater playbills, prints, posters, photographs, and

The main reading room at the Library of Congress. *Photo by Michael Dersin.*

Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts. Although these materials have come into its custody for a variety of reasons—their monetary value, importance in the history of printing, binding, association interest, or fragility—they have one point in common: the collections offer scholarly documentation about the traditions of life and learning of Western Civilization.

Noteworthy American collections begin with the library of Thomas Jefferson, purchased in 1815. The division also houses the personal libraries of Woodrow Wilson, Susan B. Anthony, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Frederic W. Goudy, and Harry Houdini. The Alfred Whital Stern Collection of Lincolniana is one of America's finest collections for researching the life of Abraham Lincoln. Among the division's artifacts are the contents of President Lincoln's pockets on the night of his assassination. The division houses more than 40 percent of American works printed before 1801, including the first book printed in British America, the Bay Psalm Book of 1640. Collections specializing in the works of Mark Twain, Henry James, and Walt Whitman reflect the depth of the holdings in American literature. Students of Americana will also take note of sizable collections of almanacs, cookbooks, dime novels, African-American imprints, Confederate States imprints, and juvenile books.

The division's European collections are highlighted by a gathering of nearly 5,700 incunabula (fifteenth-century imprints), including one of three perfect vellum copies of the Gutenberg Bible. Imprints of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are also strongly represented. The Hans and Hanni Kraus Sir Francis Drake Collection and the John Boyd Thacher Collection are especially rich in materials dealing with European travel and exploration. The religious upheavals of the sixteenth century are documented in the Reformation Collection and the Martin Luther Collection. The Russian Imperial Collection contains the royal library of Czar Nicholas II and his wife, Alexandra Fedorovna. Russian imprints of the eighteenth and nineteenth century on history and literature are housed in the Yudin Collection. Among European personages represented in special collections are Hans Christian Andersen, Rudyard Kipling, William Morris, and Jules Verne.

THE LESSING J. ROSENWALD COLLECTION

The Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection is the Library's greatest rare book gift and it represents one of the finest collections of books formed by any individual. The collection focuses on Western European and American illustrated books, with special emphasis on incunabula, sixteenth-century books printed in the Low Countries, eighteenth-century French books, William Blake, twentieth-century *livres d'artiste,* and a small but choice group of twelfth- to sixteenth-century manuscripts.

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